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CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW

BIRTHDAY ADDRESSES

AT THE

MONTAUK CLUB OF BROOKLYN

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The Montauk Club is a well-known social organization in New York which has attained great prominence and reputation under the Presidency of our distinguished fellow-citizen, Mr. Charles A. Moore.

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Address of Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, LL. D., at
the Birthday Dinner given to him by the
Montauk Club of Brooklyn, April 23, 1892.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen:

I should be the most insensible of men if I did not deeply appreciate the great compliment which you pay me. While the occasion makes my heart beat happily and arouses an honest pride, it presents no subject for a speech. This is not a gathering of political friends, martyring themselves to become a medium by which the orator can get his views before the country. It is not a collection of reformers, ambitious to have the speaker sit down because each one in the audience thinks he could improve the subject much better than the man on his feet. It is not a convention to promote principles, float policies or fresco men. Gentlemen of all political parties, of all religious creeds, of all professions and business pursuits are gathered in this room. That they meet to greet me is a distinguished honor; that the occasion is my birthday and decorates that natal hour with choicer flowers than ever have enshrined it before, this celebration, called for no public purpose or patriotic event or public man, is a tribute to the resources of friendship and the expansive properties of club life.

The twenty-third day of April is, of course, one of the most important in the calendar. On it St. George was born; also Shakespere and myself. St. George

belted the globe with his drum-beat and his flag; he became our progenitor. On account of his failure to appreciate the proper relations, national-wise, between parents and children, we found it necessary first to thrash him and then to declare our independence. That we have since become the principal object of his admiration, is due to our exertions and not to his teaching. But we always extend to him a cordial welcome, are hospitably entertained when we go to the old home, and are ready to render him any proper assistance if he should need it and it is right for us to give it.

Shakespere died at fifty, and I am to-day fifty-eight, with the consciousness of firmer health, fuller powers, and keener enjoyment of life than ever before. I believe that Shakespere died because he retired from business. He had demonstrated, for the glory of the human intellect, that "myriad minds" could be housed in one brain, and then retired to Stratford to live at ease. I have observed that health and longevity are indissolubly connected with work. Work furnishes the ozone for the lungs, the appetite and the digestion which support vigorous life, the occupation which keeps the brain active and expansive. When a man from fifty upward retires, as he says, for rest, his intellectual powers become turbid, his circulation sluggish, his stomach a burden, and the coffin his home. Bismarek at seventy-five ruling Germany, Thiers at eighty, France, Gortschakoff at eighty-one, Russia, Gladstone at eighty-two a power in Great Britain, Simon Cameron at ninety taking his first outing abroad and enjoying all the fatigues as well as the delights of

a London season, illustrate the recuperative powers of work. These men never ceased to exercise to the extent of their abilities their faculties in their chosen lines. I have seen Gladstone moving along the street with the briskness of a man of twenty-five. I have heard him at the dinner table discourse for hours upon every living question, as if he would live long enough to solve each one of them. I have sat with him in a box at the opera when the movement upon the stage absorbed him as completely as it did the musical critic in the orchestra chair; but his judgment was moved by the fresh enthusiasm of youth.

In the Old World the club is the home of the bachelor and the widower, and the house of refuge for the married man who is the victim of home rule. While the American club has, as it ought, the virtues and the attributes of that of the effete civilization of Europe, it has other virtues which are American. This gathering illustrates them. It is the gregarious feature of the American club which is its principal benefit. Its members leave at the door their politics, their creeds, their professions, their shops. In a pure democracy, with free discussion "under the rose," the best quality of each becomes the common property of all. The tone, the character, the influence of the best men meet under the best conditions and convey moral lessons which supplement those of the Church and temperance lecture, which have more restraining influence than the pledge. The Democrat discovers that the Republican is not wholly bigoted, and the Republican finds out that the Democrat is not wholly bad; the Episcopalian discovers liberality in the Presbyterian,

and the Presbyterian rubs against something besides form in the Episcopalian, while the Baptist discovers that a man can be spiritually clean without being immersed. Youth is glorious, and yet when a man of fifty and past looks back upon his mistakes, upon the perils from which Providence and not his own good sense have rescued him—perils which would not have existed if he had had during the whole period the mature judgment of to-day—he would not go back and live his life over again. Secure in the accumulated possession of friends, of family, of realized opportunity, he would not jump once more into the stream and strike out for another shore. The glory of youth is its ideals. We love to read of Burke's letter to his constituents telling them that his conscience was above their votes, and recognize our ideal statesman. We study the ideals of our Wirts and our Storys and our Websters, and idealize the lawyer; of the Jonathan Edwardses, and other giants of the pulpit, and idealize the minister; of Robert Morris, the patriotic banker of the Revolution, and idealize the business man.

We have found as we have rubbed against them in life that the statesman is often more of a schemer than a patriot; that the great soldier is egotistical, garrulous and narrow-minded on all questions but armies; that the lawyer sometimes substitutes tricks for settled principles of law and that the minister talks to the galleries rather than to the souls of the congregation; while the business man makes a phenomenal success upon standards which would reverse the Decalogue. A calm review, however, and a judicial and impartial examination of the many

examples afforded through an active and busy life, demonstrate that after all the masses are better than their representatives. The common sentiment of business is honest, of the pulpit is pure and lofty, of the congregation is moral and aspiring, of the law is just and noble, and politics has principles and honest men. Thus believing, because we know, we preserve our ideals. The woman who married us in her young girlhood is still as fresh and beautiful as on the day when she wore the orange blossoms. We fight for our party and we fight for our religion because we believe they are right; and the one is best for this world and the other sure for the next.

And now, gentlemen, I take it that the lesson of the hour is this: A multi-millionaire, who had a phenomenal faculty for accumulating money, but enjoyed neither books nor music nor social gatherings, once said to me: "What is the use of all my money to me? My house is larger, both in the city and country, my yacht is finer, my horses are faster, my pictures are better and more numerous than those of any of my neighbors, but they get as much enjoyment out of theirs as I do out of mine. I cannot eat as I would like to without getting dyspepsia, nor drink as I want to without addling my brain, and I find that, except in getting more of that of which I have already more than I know what to do with, I get little out of life." That man is a fool who does not wish to accumulate money for independence and for the benefit of his children; but he is a bigger fool to sacrifice everything for that. The college professor, intent upon his work and satisfied with his lot, the country doctor, the literary man, the jour-

nalist, the member of the professions who has time for his clubs and his friends, and his politics and his church, never ask the question, "What do I get out of life?" Life to them is one perpetual enjoyment, in expanding opportunities, in enjoyable pursuits and in steadfast friends.

Well, gentlemen, I have preached my sermon; I have given you my philosophy of life; I have touched hands with you and my heart has beat to-night in unison with yours. After all, the best things in this world are its friendships and its opportunities.

Address of Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, LL. D., at
the Birthday Dinner given to him by the
Montauk Club of Brooklyn, April 23, 1893.

The accident of this speech contributed to municipal history. After its delivery the Mayor of Brooklyn indignantly left the room. This led to a discussion from the pulpit and in the press, "Why did the Mayor leave the table? If the charges in the speech were false, he should have defended the city and refuted them."

The public were aroused, committees of investigation formed and a reform movement inaugurated which carried the city for a reform Mayor by an unprecedented majority. The city government was taken entirely out the hands of the officers who had so long abused their power.

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

I was fearful until an hour which made my coming to you very late this evening that I would not have the pleasure of joining my friends here. As you know my wife has been sick, and I have been declining all invitations for weeks. But though so ill, when she learned of this birthday dinner you intended giving me, she said: "I shall be exceedingly unhappy unless you go, and show by your presence how deeply we both appreciate the compliment." So I am here, profoundly grateful for the cordiality of your greeting.

Brooklyn is always unique. It is the most original municipality in the United States. Though a city of a million of inhabitants, commerce and competition have not impaired the freshness and simplicity of its beginnings. In other places they celebrate birthdays when the citizen whose memory is honored has been dead so long that his errors, faults and mistakes are forgotten, and only his virtues remembered. But in the midst of the controversies of the hour and when my deficiencies are painfully visible, the Montauk Club chooses to extend to me an annual welcome in the most gratifying form of a festal celebration of my birthday. Such an event could only occur in Brooklyn. This great and generous municipality has in another and conspicuous instance reversed the rules governing mortuary recognition. For more than half a century and during all the period of the wonderful development of this city, one man has been always at the front, leading in every work which would promote the welfare of his fellow-citizens. Parks and hospitals, asylums and pleasure resorts, schools, libraries and art galleries, have had their initiative in his creative mind, and their success by his energy, public spirit and executive ability. Brooklyn in erecting a statue to him in his life-time has fitly recognized its debt, and given to coming generations a perpetual example of civic virtue in this monument to the worth while living, and the memory, when dead, of James S. T. Stranahan. We trust our venerable friend, loved and honored by us all, may round out his century.

Brooklyn, happily, differs from other cities in that she retains the touch of neighborhood, which is the

value of village life, and well deserves its title of the City of Churches. The vigor and virility of Puritan origin, and the unquenchable thirst for knowledge about every one's life and affairs, have preserved through all immigrations the characteristics of the Yankee settlement. Brooklyn is the third largest city in this country, and the fourth, or fifth, in the world. It has all the elements of cosmopolitan and metropolitan life. Its public-school system is most advanced. It is the home of rare culture, high intelligence and aggressive reform. It has broad avenues, splendid parks, magnificent palaces and stately churches. At the same time, Brooklyn is rural and provincial. The odor of new-mown hay pervades all its streets and the clover-blossom is the perennial badge of its citizens. It has that personal contact of families and neighbors, so rapidly disappearing, and so invaluable in dissipating class prejudices and giving opportunity to the helping hand.

This very confidence and credulity have led to conditions which are exciting the amazement of the outside world. There is no more acute question than the problem of municipal government. It is interesting the best thought and talent for affairs in every country. The drift of rural populations to common centers, and the concentration of multitudes who have no acquaintance or common interests in cities where, as they increase in numbers, they intensify isolation, add fierceness to competition, and increase the difficulties of earning a living, have alarmed statesmen and sociologists. While the thought of the world is absorbed in efforts to solve

these problems and minimize mob dangers, by the equal distribution of benefits, rights and justice, Brooklyn is exhibiting startling originality in its contribution. It has surprised the people of the United States and paralyzed the statesmen of Europe. One of the idiosyncrasies of this municipality is that a portion of the public moneys, which are raised by taxing everybody, are absorbed by its public officials as their personal perquisites without protest or comment. This has become a habit so frequently condoned that the press does not comment upon it, or the people get enraged about it, or the reformer become unpopular by referring to it, except as a visitor and in a dress suit. Reforms are not accomplished in dress suits, but rather in fighting rig. This taking of money out of the city treasury is no longer called defalcation, or theft, or robbery, but misappropriation, or diversion to channels not authorized by law. Recently this misappropriation became so bold and bald that the criminal authorities had to move the machinery of justice. At the session of the Legislature just closed, the members from this city persuaded the Legislature to adopt this remarkable doctrine: That as this money was openly taken, and there was no attempt at concealment by the thieves, the ordinary principles in cases of robbery did not apply. The unfortunate officials were ignorantly following established precedents, and therefore their thefts should be legalized, and their persecutors of the District Attorney's office enjoined, and that relief measure became a law. But Brooklyn's contribution to the municipal question during the past year has not been limited to the

exoneration of officials who have appropriated its moneys. It has advanced to the distribution of franchises upon philanthropic principles. Other cities sell franchises, and the revenues derived from the sale of these privileges help the taxpayers and relieve the people of the burdens of government. But Brooklyn scorns such sordid motives, and gives away her franchises. Greece and Rome decorated their distinguished citizens, but only those whose statesmanship or generalship, whose genius in art or literature, had won the gratitude of the people. They crowned them with wreaths of laurel or bay. But Brooklyn decorates favored citizens before they are distinguished for anything, by giving them franchises. Certainly the action of the city government in refusing an offer of half a million of dollars for the charter for a street railway, and in the same hour giving it without money or pledges to unknown incorporators, as has been done this week, surpasses the fabled generosity of Monte Cristo, with his fabulous wealth. I could not let this annual compliment, coming from gentlemen who represent so much in this community, pass without a serious word upon some question of the hour. I have only the highest respect and best feelings for the Mayor, who honors us with his presence. I have unbounded faith in the capacity of the people for self-government so conspicuously shown in our national and state and township affairs being equal to the new conditions of great cities. It is neglect by the citizen of the first duty of the citizen which has called the attention of the country so unpleasantly to your home affairs and compelled me to utilize this occa-

sion to hold up to the light these recent events. Self-government in cities is on trial, and Brooklyn should, as Brooklyn can, be in the front of well-governed cities. The men here to-night can rescue Brooklyn from the outlaws who are in possession of her government, restore her fair fame and make her an example of high purposes in official life and success in good government.

A birthday speech is like the remains of Dennis McCann. When he was blown up by an explosion of dynamite a committee was appointed to break the news to his wife. After the spokesman had informed her of the tragedy as gently as he could, she asked if Dennis had been badly mangled. "Well, yes," said the spokesman, "his head was found in one lot, and his legs in another and his arms in a tree half a mile off." "That," said the bereaved widow, "is just like Dennis. He was always all over the place."

This is a gathering of successful men, of men who have made their own careers in the professions, in the arts and in business. It is a glorious sensation when one feels sure of his present and master of his future. With his fears and anxieties behind him, the trials and struggles, the privations and hardships of his earlier efforts seem to him to have been the exercises which have trained and disciplined him, and he feels like the successful athlete, proud of the steps by which he has mounted, and confident of himself. If he is a university man he recalls his lordship of the world when, as an undergraduate, his crew won the race, his team carried off the honors of the field and he took the prize in the debate, and he has a fuller, broader and healthier

appreciation of being a man. The boy born to fortune cannot enjoy these exquisite pleasures which come to those whose falls and bruises have left the honorable scars which eloquently testify to their persistence and skill in climbing the ladder of fame or fortune, or both. Most successful Americans reach this position of mastery of themselves and of their vocations early enough to have before them years of enjoyment. Few of them embrace the opportunity. They develop lust for power, and with it the cruelty of power. They become selfish, hard and grasping. They lose sympathy and touch with their fellows, and cultivate contempt for the less competent, the unfortunate and those who are moderately endowed. The real pleasures of life are denied such men, as they are to beasts of prey whose sole gratification is to kill and gorge.

But the wiser man says: "With the leisure which comes to independence and the trained ability for great affairs, I will now know my library; I will take up and pursue the studies which were the delight and ambition of my youth; I will become interested in public affairs and take part in politics and work for good government; I will garner old friends and make new ones and feel the sweet recompense of doing something for others." In a few years we hardly recognize this man. He has grown broad and liberal. Without neglecting his business, he is felt everywhere. The church and the club, the parish and the hospital, the literary circle and the working-man's organization are receiving the help of his influence and the inspiration of the resistless optimism of his buoyant health and success. He is experienc-

ing a happiness and fullness in living which is prolonging and enriching his life. It has been said that during the middle ages the people were marking time, but making no progress. But this man is energized and impelled by the movement of the century, and learns to enjoy the exhilaration of high speed.

The pleasures of life largely depend upon the relations existing between our subordinates, assistants and employees, and ourselves. Observation and long experience have taught me that we get better service from love than from fear. There is nothing in my career as a railroad president for which I have been so much criticised as in showing my faith in this theory by putting it in practice. An old-time executive officer said to me early in my career as a railroad president, "You have every requisite for success, except the knowledge of how to treat men. You are too considerate, too familiar and too easy. Make them feel the impassable gulf between the executive and the subordinate officer or employee. Sentiment and pity have no place in business. Be just, but severe. Remember that you are dealing only with the tools of the machine for whose working you are responsible. Distance inspires both awe and respect. Rule by fear; favors will be taken advantage of and regarded by the recipients as weakness." I differ *in toto* from this method either for efficiency of service or comfort of administration. When every man knows that if he does right the president is his friend; when he understands that the policy of the open door is for him and his grievances, and if he has any they will be instantly heard; when out of

the office and off duty he feels the camaraderie of candid recognition and hearty good-fellowship from his chief, he will protect in every way the interests and the reputation of the president. No detectives need watch him, for the company's business is his business and he is attending to it with his whole mind and strength. Loyalty and devotion to and affection for the president dominate every branch of the service, and results are obtained which are impossible by the harsher methods. The officer who is thus surrounded experiences freedom from care, consciousness of success, and that indefinable and exquisite pleasure which comes from the incense of visible and invisible, external and internal applause. Though I have been the manager for years of one of the greatest corporations, with the largest number of employees of any company in the world, I have never had a labor trouble, and it has been due to the practice of these principles. That to-night I have the health, vigor and hilarious enjoyment of a boy and look forward hopefully to serene old age is the result of the same philosophy of life and its associations.

I suppose there were periods when bigotry and venomous partisanship had their uses. They were the bleeding and the calomel of the old practice. But in our times there is infinite pleasure in the habit of tolerance. I have little faith in the man who has no creed but is friendly to all. There is a healthy attachment to our church and our party, because we believe them the best. It is delightful also to think that our neighbor's path to Heaven, though more difficult, still leads to the pearly gates, and his party is admirable for critical and deterrent purposes in

the opposition, though dangerous in power. Give to our friends the credit for as pure motives and unselfish purposes as those which actuate ourselves, and our social atmosphere has the charm of healthful differences, and in temperate discussion we all get nearer the truth.

To be glad of the recurrence of birthdays is to rejoice that we have lived and humbly petition to live longer. To have our friends join in that celebration, as you do to-night, touches with the tenderest emotion that pardonable self-consciousness which expands and asserts itself, because others so cordially shout hail and keep on.

Address of Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, LL. D., at
the Birthday Dinner given to him by the
Montauk Club of Brooklyn, April 21, 1894.

Mr. President and Gentlemen :

I deeply appreciate the compliment of these annual birthday celebrations which you tender me. After the feeling of gratification come the burden and responsibility of that inevitable incident of every American gathering—the speech. With no question before the house it is difficult to do it once, but when, before substantially the same audience, it comes the second, third or fourth time, the situation is critical to a degree. If the guest and orator indulges in rare pleasantries, pleasing platitudes and that ingenious collocation of words which says nothing and means nothing, he insults the intelligence of his hearers. If, on the other hand, in an audience like the present, composed of men of all political faiths, all religious creeds, and all sorts of complicated associations and interests, he says something, a section of his audience are sure to say that they are insulted. The speaker, under such conditions, is always in the position of the small boy whose enterprise pulls from the closet the family musket and points it at the head of his sister. When the coroner's jury sits upon the case, his explanation is that he did not know it was loaded. Whether the meeting shall continue harmoniously or break up in a row depends upon whether the owner of the in-

dulged foot which got in the way of the trampling speaker groans and confesses his pleasure, or howls and acknowledges the corn.

At the celebration last year the proper question seemed to me to be municipal reform. It appeared equally proper to indulge in caustic comments and peppery pleasantry upon matters affecting your city which had received the attention of the Governor of the State, the Legislature, the Grand Jury of your county and your courts. Had it dropped into the ordinary sea of after-dinner give and take, the question would have been dissipated with the smoke of the last cigar. But somehow or other, while I was innocently cavorting around the field, everybody grasped his neighbor's arm convulsively, and seriously remarked, "Chauncey has said something!" The next morning from the Aldermanic chamber of the Brooklyn City Hall, from the court-room of the police justice where the blind goddess loves to dwell, from departmental chiefs and city contractors came the screams that the gun was loaded and everybody was filled with shot. Incidentally, pulpit, press and public-spirited citizens proceeded to inquire what was the matter, and the result was one of those revolutions which occur but once in a quarter of a century in the history of a municipality, and which restored the weakening confidence in popular government in great cities.

There should be no politics in the administration of a city. It is a pure matter of business. It is whether the streets upon which the people travel, the water which the people drink, the lights which illuminate the people's way, the police who protect

the people's lives and property, the courts which administer justice for the people, are conducted in the interests of the people, and give the best possible results for the least possible expenditure. The only wonder is that the stockholder does not in the municipality show the same earnest and attentive interest that he does in the railway or the bank or the insurance company in which he holds his stock.

It may be permissible to say in the freedom of the hour that all the fruits that were gathered by the great reform tornado of last year are neither ripe nor sound. Some of them certainly seem to require an amount of that tonic which is known as popular indorsement and public opinion to keep them straight upon measures of the greatest concern to the people of the state and of the localities.

I have been led to remark, and wondered at discovering, that it was accepted as fault-finding, that there are about Brooklyn many of the elements of a great village, many of the characteristics of a New England town. We, all of us, with our experience in the government of great cities, if we would consider seriously the question, would rejoice to find that more of that personal responsibility on the part of the voter, that individual espionage into public affairs by the citizen, which characterize the suffrage of New England, were the characteristics of the great cities of the country.

I heard an incident in my recent travels of a caucus held in a western city, where an enthusiastic orator presented in glowing phrase the merits for the nomination of that grand soldier, General Mulligan. The speaker on the other side said he knew

all about the patriotic services of General Mulligan, for he was a private in the same company and the sentinel who stood at the door of the General's tent when a Confederate officer called; that he bent his ear to listen to the colloquy, and he heard the Confederate officer say: "I want that sword of yours," and then the General said, "It is yours." The friend of the General, unabashed by this exposure, arose to say that General Mulligan was a perfect gentleman, and when the Confederate officer expressed a desire for his sword why should he not give it to him when he could buy a thousand like it in Chicago? The result was that the General was nominated almost by acclamation.

It strikes me that the only platform left in this country for absolutely free speech is the after-dinner platform. All others are hedged about with conditions which make it impossible for the orator to speak his whole mind. At political meetings the audience is generally composed of those of the same faith, and they expect that the other party will be proved to be utterly bad, and their own to be entirely good. The lecture platform was at one time the place where a popular man with convictions could express those convictions with effect, and have them reach the remotest corners of the earth. It was then that Theodore Parker, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and Ralph Waldo Emerson, under the privileges of the lecture platform, inculcated the most unpalatable truths of liberty. Wendell Phillips could be howled down in Faneuil Hall, or mobbed in the Broadway Tabernacle, but on the lecture platform, in describing the life and

deeds and the death of Toussaint L'Ouverture, he could drop the seeds of that truth which bore fruit upon the plains of Kansas and flowered in the emancipation proclamation of Abraham Lincoln.

The pulpit in the old New England days had absolute freedom in the discussion of every state, town or county question. The judgment of the minister was the verdict of the people. This continued in some remote Connecticut villages even into the Civil War. I remember being once with that capital campaigner, General Bruce, when the Town Committee said to him, as he was about to address a Connecticut audience in a rural neighborhood: "General, our minister is very much disturbed by Lincoln's acts outside the Constitution. He says that his Bible teaches him that the law is ordained of God, and, therefore, he cannot see why the Constitution can be violated even to free the slaves or liberate the country." General Bruce, with his fine personal appearance, and his clergyman-like utterance, rose to the occasion. He said: "I understand that that eminent and eloquent divine, who is the pastor of the leading church in this village, has doubts about the rightfulness of President Lincoln's acts because they are not sanctioned by the Constitution, although they are for the freedom of the slaves and the safety of the Republic. I reply to him that when Moses received the tablet which contained the Constitution of the children of Israel directly from the hands of the Almighty, and went to the foot of the mountain and found the children of Israel worshipping the idols, he smashed that Constitution into ten thousand pieces, though it

was constructed by God, and not by man, and drew his sword and rested not in killing the rebels until the sun went down." The minister arose, came forward, grasped the General warmly by the hand, and said: "General, the exegesis of that chapter which you have given is not in any commentary in my library, but it strikes me as very sound."

To-day, however, the pulpit is not a force in the discussion of public affairs. Not but that it is equipped with as much courage, and as much eloquence, and as much learning as ever, but for some reason, which I have not now the time to discuss, the public does not now accept from the pulpit its views upon municipal, state or national affairs, so we have left only the after-dinner platform. That is yet free from the chains of conventionality, custom or routine. At the annual dinner of the New England Society both in this city and in New York; at the annual dinner of the Chamber of Commerce, in New York, men of national reputation, behind whose words stand a name and a record which men respect, whose lips utter truths, let on the light in a way which would not be permitted anywhere else. So far is this permitted that among that most sensitive people, the Irish, that genial and caustic genius, Mr. Joseph H. Choate, indulged in utterances which were received with laughter and applause; uttered anywhere else, Mr. Choate would have been compelled to leave the platform. I trust that for the sake of good morals, good government, good laws, good candidates, for the sake of all that goes to right living and right thinking, and right voting, the after-dinner platform may continue free.

It is a peculiarity of the American people that they attend to but one thing at a time, but they attend to that with great thoroughness, and they have an almighty anxiety to settle it before they take up anything else. For a period the whole thought of the country was concentrated upon the interpretation of the Constitution which might mean the indivisibility of the National Union or the sovereignty of the several states. When that was settled by the marvelous and unanswerable argument of Daniel Webster, in his reply to Hayne in the United States Senate, the next question was the spread or continued existence of human slavery. When that was settled, the next question, which called a million of men to arms, was the preservation of the Union free from slavery and upon the lines decided in the argument of Daniel Webster. And when that was settled the American people took up the great question of the national credit, as affected by the solvency of the currency and the character of its industrial legislation. The exigent question of the hour appealing to every man, woman and child is prosperity and employment for the people. I do not speak of this in a controversial sense, but only as a condition which has produced an unusual degree of hopelessness and to ask you whether that hopelessness is justified and should end in despair. Had you traveled with me during the last week, when I covered all the territory from the Missouri to New York and from the Atlantic to the Canadian border, you would have felt your faith revived, if it had at all weakened, in the resurrecting power and the tremendous and resistless energies of the people

of the Nation. They stand by their mills waiting to open them; they stand by their shops waiting to work in them; they stand by their stores waiting for activity; they stand in the railway yards and by the railway depots waiting for work. All they ask is that the question which suspends the activity of the business energies of the country shall be settled at once, one way or the other. With a people like the people of the United States certainty is the assurance of success. There may be greater success under one certainty than there is under another, but whatever the certainty the people will adjust themselves to it. On the other hand, doubt is death.

A birthday anniversary reminds one both of the beginning and of the end of life. It suggests the inquiry, "Are you glad you started? Are you satisfied with your career as far as you have gone? When and how will it end?" I never saw a man who had enough energy to crawl who was so tired and so disgusted with this world that he was ready to climb the golden stairs. Granted a good constitution and then a clear conscience and unclouded brain, a temperate life and plenty of work, and a man can live forever. He neither rusts nor rots.

What kills people is worry—worry for that which they do not want and do not need. I have seen hundreds of men who had passed middle life and who were assured for the rest of their days competency and income, launch into speculation, lose their fortune and die of worry. I have seen thousands, for the sake of larger interests or greater gains, go into business which required the energy

and the vitality of youth and experience, and die of worry. I have seen them led by the importunities of friends to indorse notes beyond their ability to pay them, and die of worry. On the other hand, the best, the most useful, both in their energies and in their example, of the people I have known are the wise old men who believe that they have a mission and who work as long as they have breath, and who mean to breathe as long as they can. Commodore Vanderbilt was worth \$20,000,000 at sixty, \$30,000,000 at seventy, and \$100,000,000 at eighty-two years of age. That demonstrates that with his frugal living and adjustment to work and responsibility of his capacity, the meridian of his powers was reached after he had passed three-score years and ten. Gladstone is a living example of the highest honors, the most majestic grasp of questions affecting a vast empire, coming to him after he had passed the period of three-score years and ten.

The world grows better as it grows older, and people grow better as the world continues to roll on. May you and I, my friends, most of us having passed the middle period of life, find the evening illuminated with all the splendors of the dawn while we possess the vigor of the meridian.

Address of Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, LL. D.,
at the Birthday Dinner given to him
by The Montauk Club of Brooklyn,
April 20th, 1895.

Mr. President and Gentlemen :

On the 23d day of April Shakespeare, St. George and I were born, and I am the only survivor. It is hardly a case of the survival of the fittest. This annual compliment which you pay me is highly appreciated and valued. There is always somewhere, however, either a fly or the remains of one in the purest amber. In my case it is the necessity on these recurring anniversaries of making a speech to substantially the same three or four hundred gentlemen who honor me, when the only subject before the house is the person whose birthday is celebrated. As he is forbidden by every rule to talk of himself, how shall he meet this annual obligation? He is in serious danger of having the guests cry out, as one of them did at a hotel where I was recently in the South, who, after the tenth day, as the evening banquet closed, remarked in a loud voice (I do not know that I get his chapter and verse correctly), "Hebrews xiii, 2." The indignant landlady after a while said to him: "Sir, some of the best families which I have in my hotel are Jews, and they are hurt at this reference to them." He replied: "Madam, I did not refer to them. It was simply a tribute to

your daily dinner which I intended to convey by quoting a verse which reads, 'The same yesterday, to-day and forever.'"

There is represented here every profession and business of our American life. The clergyman, the lawyer, the doctor, the man of affairs and the man of literature sit to-night within the hospitable walls of this most hospitable of clubs. The year since we last met has been so significant of events of moment to the well being of the State and society that they impress the lesson of progress and cheer the heart of the optimist by the evidences of continued improvement in the world. It has been particularly a year of revolt, of independence and of the results of beneficent revolution. Our platform in the Montauk is as broad as the universe and as liberal as truth.

After one serious break which broke the breakers, our discussions are free. It is understood that we are of all creeds and faiths in religion and politics. It is understood that we are here not as Republicans, nor as Democrats, nor as Prohibitionists, nor as Mugwumps, nor as Independents. We are here under the genial banner of good fellowship, to say what we please, so long as it is uttered "with charity toward all and with malice toward none." We start with the maxim that no party has a monopoly of virtue and no party a corner on vice. It is the party in power out of which virtue oozes and which gradually accumulates vice. Hence we have had the conditions which have led to the phenomenal overturning since last we were here. When Kings County changes 50,000 votes, when a Republican Mayor of New York, by the changing of

70,000 votes one way to 40,000 the other, is elected, when for the first time in ten years a Republican Governor and a Republican Legislature get into power by 150,000 majority, it is not a party victory. It is because the good men of the majority, finding it impossible to purify municipal or state government within the organization, join the minority party to teach their rulers, organizers and leaders a drastic lesson.

It is the plain teachings of such events that the lucky recipients of this combination of party fidelity and party disgust have it in their power to hold a sufficient number of the independent and thoughtful elements which came to them, to continue for a period the power in their own hands, or else they can so use their opportunities for personal, or selfish, or purely party purposes as not only to drive away the men who had joined them temporarily, but also a large body of their own independent following. In this way it is quite possible, if we may make such a metaphor, for a party to experience within a twelvemonth alterations from zenith to zero.

The despair of the publicist and the sociologist has been the government of cities. The intruding from the country and from abroad of desirable and undesirable peoples and the rapidity of settlement, making impossible the processes of assimilation, have made the municipal problem the despair of the statesman. But the last twelvemonth has solved that problem—solved it on the side of liberty, and American liberty. It has demonstrated that the *vox populi* is the *vox dei*, providing the voice of the

people can find some medium through which it can be heard.

How shall the voice be registered in legislation? When a committee of a hundred or a committee of seventy of the best citizens that all parties may have, who have the confidence of their fellow-citizens, present a programme, and that programme is adopted by the public vote, it carries with it the instruction that the officers elected are the chosen representatives of the people, upon whom the people have put the responsibility, and in whom the people repose the confidence to frame the legislation which shall do away with the evils under which they have suffered and bring to them the reforms and good government for which they have fought and voted.

Any declaration by statesmen, however wise, however experienced, however conscientious, from distant communities, that these committees and the officers elected on the wave of reform are novices in politics, that they do not know what the people want, that they do not understand the needs of great populations, that their bills are foolish and their measures idiotic, is full of danger to the party organization, of which these gentlemen are the leaders, and its success in the future. It may be that the measures are idiotic; it may be that they are not wise; but the people whose representatives have framed them, as soon as they are defeated, will believe that they are the wisest measures ever devised by man, and the oftener they are defeated the more they will insist upon having them, or punish the party which defeated them.

An event has occurred during the year, little noted, and yet of the greatest interest. I arrived in Chicago a few weeks ago to find candidates lost sight of in the popular discussion of a principle. The cabman who drove me around, the porter who carried my bag, the waiter who stood behind my chair in the hotel, the clerk who handed me the book in which to register my name, the ticket agent in the railway depot, the conductor on the car, the clerk in the big drygoods store and the elevator boy who carried us to the infinite heights of the Chicago building, all wanted to know what I thought of Civil Service Reform. The Legislature had passed a bill submitting to the people whether their offices should all be put upon Civil Service principles or should be the patronage of party leaders as theretofore. The result of this discussion in that most polyglot and cosmopolitan of Western cities was a majority of 50,000 for Civil Service. I remember when reformers with so-called fads, like the late George William Curtis, suggested Civil Service twenty years ago, how it was scouted by all parties. We all of us who were active in politics believed that parties could not be run except by patronage, and we all of us—and I as readily as the rest—declared that without patronage a party leader could not hold his place nor a party retain its power. It was for the patronage with which to control the party organization that Weed and Greeley split their party in two; it was for the same high purpose that Conkling, on the one side, and all the leaders against him on the other, kept us in an internecine war; it was for the same lofty object that the state machine

headed by Daniel Manning, and the city machine, headed by John Kelley, disrupted the Democratic party; and patronage, with its supposed power and influence, has those eminent knights, armed cap-a-pie, with lance at rest, at either end of the lists, waiting for the signal to charge, Grover Cleveland and David Bennett Hill. And yet the people of Chicago, defying the politicians, have taught them that government can get along without patronage. Civil service applied to cities solves the question of municipal machines and municipal bossism. To that must be added the separation of city elections from the state and general elections, so that a man can vote against a thief or an incompetent man in his own party for mayor or sheriff without destroying the tariff or passing a bill for the free coinage of silver.

The processes for political power are simple. A few masterful men, whose business is politics, and who believe that the end justifies the means, get control of the machinery of the dominant party in the municipality. They elect their mayor and their board of aldermen, which secures for them the public works, the docks, water, gas and electricity, and that gives them the patronage. Then they appoint the judges of the police courts and the civil justices, and that gives them infinite power over the liberty and property of the citizen. Then they elect their members of the legislature, and that prevents the governing body from interfering with them. And then they intimidate the higher courts, so that no complaints will be entertained. This accomplished, the great city is absolutely in the hands of a feudal

baron, with his feudatories around him, intrenched in the City Hall. The city treasury supports from ten to twenty thousand retainers who are dependent absolutely upon the barony for their subsistence. Through them the baron holds the primaries, controls the organization, overawes inspectors, manages the count, owns the court and carries the legislature in his pocket. Then we have this amazing condition, that the processes of liberty are capable of greater tyranny than the autocratic will of the despot. Despotism is tempered by the opportunities of assassinating the tyrant. Against a semi-republican and semi-oligarchical government like that of France there can be revolution, but against a municipal tyranny owning the polls, controlling the courts, managing the finances and masters of the party organization, frequent elections prevent revolt, and there is nobody to assassinate.

I may be criticised for saying that the processes of liberty can be made more tyrannical than the edicts of a Czar, but you all remember in the marvellous revelations of the Lexow committee that widow whose friends contributed a few hundred dollars for her to have a cigar store with which to support herself and her four children. She kept house in one room and sold her cigars in the other; she sent her children to the public school, and she was doing everything which a good, virtuous, masterful, motherly woman could do to bring a family up respectably and keep out of the poor-house. The ward policeman wanted the contribution which she could not pay. Refusing, she was haled to the police station, taken before the police judge, and

sent to the penitentiary for six months, and when, on her release, she returned to her home she found her little stock of goods had been divided among the ministers of the law and her children had disappeared. It only required a policeman, a captain and a police justice to make possible an outrage which could not be perpetrated in any other country or in any other city in this wide world. Now civil service in municipal affairs makes this sort of crime impossible. Masterful men will always be leaders. They will always have a following, they will always be dominant in the control of party organizations, but under civil service there will be no thousands or tens of thousands of retainers supported out of the city treasury to defeat the taxpayers who pay them. These officers will be relieved from party pledges and party control, and the leaders must appeal to the people. There will always be leaders and so I say, "All hail the leader who, like Andrew Jackson, or Henry Clay, or James G. Blaine, or William E. Gladstone, the people can follow."

And now, gentlemen, the year having proved so eventful, I have been struck with the questions which are brought to me by the interviewer. I have found that if you wish to know what the people are talking about it is first developed by the man with the pad and pencil who drops into your house or office and wants your opinion on it. Two questions seem to have been started suddenly, and each assumed at once world-wide importance. The first, from the hitherto unknown Dr. Nordau, of Germany, is: "Is the world degenerating?" The second is Bismarck's wonderful remark in his eightieth-birth-

day speech, that he never received any happiness from his successes. I beg leave to differ with both of these eminent men. The facts which I have just recited show that the world is not degenerating, and Bismarck, when he made the startling observation that success brought no happiness, ignored the fact that his success had brought to him on his eightieth birthday the homage and devotion of the German peoples, not only in their own land, but wherever they might be all over the world; that this homage was received for his success in establishing German unity, and for his success in illustrating the possibilities of German brains and German energy and what they could accomplish, and that this tribute of love and affection and veneration, coming from all over the world, gave to him on his eightieth birthday more happiness than had been concentrated in all the days and all the years of his past existence. "Is the world degenerating?" says the newspaper interrogator. Certainly it is not in the liberties which are being gained for the people, because they are increasing year by year. Certainly it is not in the education which is afforded by the Government, for that is enlarging and becoming better all the time. Certainly it is not in standards of morality. Twenty-five years ago Palmerston was Prime Minister of England and Disraeli the leader of the opposition. Palmerston at eighty had been detected in an intrigue of which the proofs were clear and positive. The party leaders went to Disraeli's and said: "Let us drive him from office." Disraeli's answer was: "If you start that movement, I resign, because it will lead to his becoming so popular that he will

remain permanently in power." Ten years afterward the same thing drove Dilke from public life, and later did infinite injury to Parnell, and to-day there is no man in America or in England, in public life, who could survive the clear proofs of a violation of the Seventh Commandment. All these things, which are taken as evidences of degeneration, are simply the nineteenth century cleaning house for its new tenant, the twentieth century. There are always about the old house rubbish, unused furniture, old rags and the remnants of filth and disease. The good tenant is careful to remove these evidences which would reveal to the new one the family weaknesses and cause him to criticise the family habits. The nineteenth century is a good tenant and it is sweeping out fads and humbugs of every nature and description. It is gathering them up and putting them in shape, either to bury or burn them.

We have labor troubles, and yet with the various solutions of paternalism in government, of arbitration, of co-operation and educational advantages bringing capital and labor nearer together, the nineteenth century bids fair to solve the problem before the twentieth century comes in. We have had our stage flooded with plays which made the heroine anything but what she ought to be, until the playwright believed that without such a heroine the play was impossible, and we have simply brought her out in the closing years of the century to expose her hideousness in order that the twentieth might not find her in the house. We have had aestheticism and have cultivated it, and praised it, and honored it, and finally, when we found it was filth covered with

flowers, we have buried it in a felon's cell with Oscar Wilde. We have had our literature, which the German scientist especially deprecates, where the good old novel which amused and inspired us and brought us in contact with humanity and with nature for the betterment of our mind and soul was succeeded by the modern experiment. The new novel came from Zola and Tolstoi and Ibsen and their like. It came to preach doctrines. The new novel bored us with sermons, and sent us to bed with the headache, because of problems and possibilities which threatened the disruption of society, of the family and of all in which we had invested our hearts, our hopes and our future. The closing hours of the nineteenth century are getting rid of those novels by rushing frantically, with outstretched arms and mouths wide open, to human nature, humble, fascinating, plain, common, human nature in *Trilby*.

The transparent lesson to us of the closing hours of the nineteenth century is that while the century dies, we should live as long as we can. We can only live by getting out of life all there is in it. What is happiness, anyway? While I do not discredit the future world, but, on the contrary, believe in it, according to the doctrines of the Church which I attend, yet we do not personally know, either from those who have come from the other world, or from revelations received from there, precisely what is the happiness of the next world. Our problem is not so much to long for that as to find our happiness here. Where is it? It is in a healthy mind, a healthy soul and a healthy body, and even if your body is not healthy, you can keep the other two in fair condition.

The secrets of happiness and longevity, in my judgment, are to cherish and cultivate cheerful, hopeful and buoyant spirits. If you haven't them, create them. Enjoy things as they are. The raggedest person I ever saw was a Turkish peasant standing in the field, clothed in bits of old carpet. But the combination of color made him a thing of beauty, if not a joy forever. Let us never lose our faith in human nature, no matter how often we are deceived. Do not let the deceptions destroy confidence in the real, honest goodness, generosity, humanity and friendship that exist in the world. They are overwhelmingly in the majority. I have lost twenty-five per cent. of all I have ever made in loaning money and endorsing notes, and have incurred generally the enmity of those I have helped because I did not keep it up. But every once in a while there was somebody who did return in such full measure the credit for the help that was rendered, that faith was kept alive, and the beauty and the goodness of our human nature were made evident.

I have appointed about one thousand men to office and employment which gave them support and the chance to climb to positions of greater responsibility and trust if they had the inclination and ability. About nine out of every ten of them throw stones at me because I did not do better for them, and keep pushing them, and yet there are a hundred or so who, by the exercise of their own ability, their own grasp of the situation, have gone on to the accomplishment of such high ambitions and successes, and have appreciated in so many ways the help extended to them by helping others, that again my faith in human

nature remains undiminished. And my last recipe for happiness is to keep in touch with the young. Join in their games, be a partner in the dance, romp the fastest and turn the quickest in the Virginia reel or the country dance, go up to the old college and sit down and light your pipe and sing college songs, take the children to the theatre and howl with them at the roaring farce, and laugh with them at the comedy and cry with them at the tragedy, be their confidant in their love affairs, and if they are not equal to it, write their love letters, and never stop writing some for yourself.

Thus, gentlemen, will the twentieth century, with its clearer purposes, its higher endeavor and its limitless opportunities, welcome us older fellows as the youngest and most vigorous of those who are to solve its problems and make its record.

Address of Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, LL. D., at
the Birthday Dinner given to him by the
Montauk Club of Brooklyn, April 18, 1896.

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

Words would be inadequate for me to express my profound appreciation of this continuation of your annual compliment. The large number and the distinction in every walk in life of the gentlemen who participate in this courtesy give to it more than individual or local significance. It seems to me to be a platform upon which can be expressed, with frankness and freedom, opinions upon all questions. We may be of one great party or the other in politics, or of no party; we may be of any sect in religion, or of no profession, and yet a fair treatment of any subject in the field of inquiry or controversy is received in the broadest and most catholic spirit. The discussions which, serious or festive, have marked this occasion in former years, have been attended afterward by extraordinary results in municipal and state affairs. We have had the fullest proof that the truth, sown ever so carelessly, if it falls in proper soil, bears ever the most generous fruit.

We are again, as we were four years ago, in a presidential year. We will all admit that the conditions are reversed. Then the handwriting was upon the wall which marked the success of the opposition over the party which had held power in the

government for a generation. Then we all felt that there was to be a condemnation of the system of protection as a principle of public policy, and the trial, in some form, of the theory of free trade. We all knew that the craving for more currency would find expression either in the actual debasement of the currency or in a combination of forces so powerful and so threatening as to endanger the continuance of settled standards. But the handwriting is equally clear upon the wall to-day that there is to be another trial, and a vigorous one, of the principle and practice of protection; that there is to be a defeat, and an overwhelming one, of the friends of fiat money, of a debased currency or of the free coinage of silver.

Rapid as has been the progress of the century, fast as has been the pace of the half century and great as have been the evolutions and revolutions of the last quarter of a century, none have been more significant or more pregnant with results to our country than the story of the last four years. It will stand by itself as one of the most interesting chapters when the future historian comes to write the history of the people of the United States during the nineteenth century. The retirement from power of the Republican party after thirty years of rule was an event of no ordinary importance; the advent into the possession of every department of our government of the Democratic party and its allies was an event of extraordinary interest. These four years will be remarkable for the culmination in them of the fads and theories which have come to the front since the civil war. Fifty years from now the story

will read like a romance of the rise of the Populist party, its wild, vague, impossible and impracticable theories, the singular public men whom it threw to the surface, its capture of several states and its ability to hold the balance of power in the Congress of the United States, and then its disintegration and dissipation almost as rapidly as it was organized. After three years of stormy life and untimely death we may apply to it the epitaph upon the tombstone of the infant, "if so soon I was to be done for what on earth was I begun for?"

Not less interesting will be the history of the movement in favor of the free coinage of silver and the great proportions which it assumed. It was but a year ago that it controlled all the southern states, all the states between the Missouri river and the Pacific coast and had a strong foot-hold in the northwest. It frightened the politicians of both parties; it forced recognition in both of the national platforms and drove into silence or acquiescence most of our statesmen of national reputation. The publicist who reviews the period and seeks the causes of the extraordinary prostration of industries, suspension of business and paralysis of employment and labor during the last three years, as he comes to consider how much want of confidence and weakening of credit had to do with it, will assign a large place among the factors of the problem to this powerful and aggressive movement. While I differ widely from President Cleveland on almost every part of his public policy; while I think that his theories, so far as they have been practically carried out, have been disastrous, and if wholly car-

ried out would have been fatal to our industries, nevertheless in the frankness and the fairness of this platform it is due to him to say that the rout of the free coinage of silver policy and the energizing of the national credit by the triumph of sound money are more largely due to his throwing upon that side, with magnificent courage and ability, the whole strength and power of his great office and of his administration than to anything else.

While we have had a period of distress which has brought so much suffering to millions of homes, and while the cost has been more than that of a disastrous war, yet the suffering has not been in vain and the cost has not been lost if it shall have gained for us in education by discussion and by the experience of our people the death of the absurdities of populism and the triumph of that sound money and unquestioned currency which shall keep this great trading, business and commercial republic in honorable relations with and in the lead among the great trading, business and commercial nations of the world. But that will not be its only compensation. The experience of the last twelve months has enforced the lessons of the necessity of stability in the diplomatic service, of training for the difficult art of diplomacy and of a foreign office which shall have in its permanency and in its power both the confidence of Congress and the country and the ability to cope with dignity and honor with every question which affects the relations of the United States with foreign governments.

We do not differ as to the Monroe Doctrine, as explained by Monroe and Jefferson and Madison

and Webster and Calhoun, being the settled policy of the country, to be sustained at every cost and every sacrifice. We do not differ in the sympathy and the practical measures possible to support it, which should be given to the suffering Christians of Armenia, and the stoppage of the horrible massacres taking place in that territory. We do not differ in the feeling we all have that the proconsular government of the Roman Empire of its distant provinces, with its despotic authority and crushing exactions, ought no longer to exist anywhere in the world, and especially in our neighboring state, the Island of Cuba. But at Washington these most delicate, most grave and most difficult questions have been met by resolutions and speeches which, in the language of diplomacy and the custom of foreign offices, mean a declaration of war. The magnificent revival of business, so hopeful for every industry, for every mill, for every factory, for every furnace, for every railroad, for labor and for wages, which began in the fall had become paralyzed by March by the country daring neither to invest nor employ nor to buy because of a continuing refusal to provide the government with the means for meeting its ordinary obligations in the time of profound peace, or buying great guns or building fortifications for the protection of our coast and harbors, while at the same time Congress was practically declaring war every few days and calling to some power to come on and submit all differences, whether formulated or not, to the arbitrament of the sword. There must come out of the terrible cost of this method of diplomacy—a cost without results,

either in fame, or in territory, or measures,—a strengthening of our diplomatic service and our foreign office, and there must also come the triumph of a movement begun within the year, and rapidly commanding the confidence and support of the best sentiment of the civilized world, for the creation of a permanent international court of arbitration to which nations, and especially English-speaking nations, can with dignity and honor submit every question in dispute between them. It has become the habit to shout “coward!” and “commerce!” and “business considerations!” and “lack of patriotism!” against every proposition which looked to the peaceful settlement of international questions and the avoidance if possible of the horrors and the sacrifices in life and in treasure of a great war. But the Christian sentiment, the civilized sentiment, the manly sentiment, the patriotic sentiment of our country believes that it is not cowardly to have business prosperous, to have capital employed, to have a place for every laborer who desires to labor, to have wages remunerative and constantly increasing, to have happy times and peaceful lives, to have, if you please, good business, if they can be secured with honor to our country, without danger to our interests, and by the peaceful process of arbitration or judicial decision.

I have been impressed, during a recent tour over eight thousand miles, with the fact that we as Americans know less about each other than we do about foreign countries. Almost any intelligent person whom you meet is familiar with the industrial and social conditions of Great Britain, France, Germany

and Italy, and the knowledge of many of them extends to all the continents of the globe. Very few are familiar with the climatic, the agricultural, the industrial or the commercial conditions and possibilities of the Gulf states or of that vast territory which extends from the boundaries of Oregon and California over thousands of miles of arid plain, with some beautiful oases of cultivated land, up to the Missouri river. Our country is so vast in extent, and capital, labor and competition have become so concentrated in crowded centers that we need a department of government to teach congested populations where they can find air, health, wealth and liberty. Why should miners be starving in one territory when productive mines are calling for labor in another? Why should farmers, freezing in inclement climates, or with their barns, their houses and their fences and their stock blown to pieces by resistless blizzards, give it up and return again to the older settlements, when rich fields and alluring climates wait for and want them? In the thousands of miles of the great American desert ten millions of people could live in prosperity and happiness under a scientific system of irrigation—such a system as only the government could inaugurate. Strange as it may appear the historian in looking over our century and citing the benefactions of our country will give a place, and a good one, to Brigham Young. Having stopped his caravan in the Salt Lake Valley with the mountains of snow encircling it and the alkali plains hard and dry and unproductive, he saw that if he brought the water from the mountain and distributed it on the plain he could produce an

earthly paradise for his co-religionists. He also discovered that the real secret of successful farming in a country of rich soil is the small farm which the farmer and his family can look after personally and attend to every detail. That principle has made Utah the most prosperous of the intermontane states and Salt Lake its largest city.

Governor Flower tells of a farmer from Jefferson county who settled in the Northwest. In narrating to the Governor his experience he said that in order to resist the blizzard he built a snow fence four feet wide and six feet high. "When the wind blew it over, then the darned old fence was six feet wide and four feet high." I found this farmer in Texas where he had gone with his neighbors. They had demonstrated that rice could be profitably raised upon hitherto almost worthless prairie land and that little colony are now living in comfort and comparative affluence. We know so little of the magnificent scenery, the unique succession of fertile valleys and the climatic and productive possibilities of California, because nature, always jealous of her treasures, has placed the Pacific ocean on one side of the golden coast and a thousand miles of desert on the other. The heat in that desert was a hundred and seven in the car in March, and Yuma is said to be the hottest place in the world. It is narrated of a soldier who died there, who was the wickedest man in the regiment, that he was buried with military honors and went to his proper place. A few days afterwards the commander of the garrison saw him walking about the camp and threatened him with arrest, court-martial and execution for having come

back so unceremoniously after he had been properly mustered out. The soldier's excuse was that he had become so accustomed to the temperature of Ft. Yuma that he had come back for his blankets. After twelve hours of intolerable heat and suffocating dust the traveller comes almost instantaneously into a garden of roses, fields of evergreen alfalfa grass and groves of orange, lemon, peach and other trees filling the air with the perfume of their blossoms or laden with golden fruit. The desert ends and paradise begins where irrigation has redeemed the sand and made it a fruitful mine of annual wealth. We met at one of the stations in the desert an original genius, a surviving product of earlier times when the west was wild and woolly. From saloonkeeper, cowboy and desperado he had become a justice of the peace, the fountain of the law and the keeper of the village grocery. He greeted me cordially, said he would have known me anywhere from my picture, and then frankly answered my question as what in his judgment were the two most important decisions in his judicial career. He said: "The first was a man brought before me for shooting a Chinaman. I decided that there was nothing in the statutes of the state or of the United States that made it a crime to kill a Chinaman. And," said he, "when I read in our county paper the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States on the Chinese Exclusion Act I found that my opinion had been sustained by Chief Justice Waite. The other case was that of a man who fell into the gorge of the canon. In the discharge of my duty as a judge I sat upon the body and searched it. I found in its clothes forty dollars

in money and a thirty-two calibre pistol. Under the laws of the state of Texas it is a misdemeanor to carry concealed weapons and so I fined the corpse the pistol and the forty dollars for violating the law and the court took possession of the property."

The lesson of California is the marvellous difference between the profit pro rata of large and small farms. We rode for thirty-five miles through one farm of a hundred thousand acres and through others of forty and fifty thousand acres. The large farmers as a rule were complaining of the low price of wheat, the comparative worthlessness of stock and the diseases in the vines of their vineyards. But every man we met who was growing oranges, lemons, apricots, prunes or olives upon ten or twenty acres and giving to the culture a personal, trained, educated and scientific attention, was averaging three hundred dollars an acre from orchards which were five years old. Upon these figures the mind is taxed to determine the number of families which could live in unaccustomed comfort and in unequalled climatic conditions in California. I could not help contrasting my father's old farm up in Peekskill in the early days, with its annual crop of stones and taxes, with the gentleman whom I visited, whose cosy cottage was a home of comfort and culture and whose ten acres, with enough labor only to keep him healthy, yielded him three thousand dollars a year. He pressed the button, and then irrigation, good soil, the most heavenly of climates and a Chinaman did the rest.

We are naturally a boastful people and yet the better I know our country the more I am impressed

with our boundless basis for bragging. The language of exaggeration and metaphor seem inadequate to state the conditions for health, wealth and happiness in the United States when you add to them the possibilities of the future. Education and credit are the factors which will develop these possibilities and minimize the return of periodical disaster. The largest and the finest building in every town on the Pacific coast is a schoolhouse. And by credit I mean national credit with unquestioned stability, and assuring to enterprise and energy the results of their forecast and daring. The more I see and know of the United States the more I am an optimist. And the more I see and the better I know the men and women of our time the more I am a happy optimist. There are many secrets of perpetual youth, but one of the best, in the enjoyment which it gives to the increase of years, is faith—faith in the goodness of the times and the people who live in them, faith that the present is better than the past and faith that the future will be better than the present. The kiss with which we bid good night to our loved ones is sweeter far if accompanied with the belief that we shall greet them on the morrow with the kiss of a better day.

We must have some faith even in our illusions. The Legislature has just exhibited it in solemnly enacting into law that a bicycle is not a vehicle but a trunk. We are always in danger if we go too far in doubt or experiment, as was exhibited in that mortuary poem of Cincinnatus which so delighted Dean Holme:

Little Willie from the mirror
Sucked the mercury all off,
Thinking in his childish error
It would cure his whooping cough;
At the funeral, Willie's mother
Blandly said to Mr. Brown,
It was a chilly day for Willie
When the mercury went down.

Well, gentlemen, we close to-night another year.
May the cordial handclasp with which we met keep
our hearts warm with the anticipation of another
cordial and vigorous greeting for us all when next
April comes around.

Address of Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, LL. D., at
the Birthday Dinner given to him by the
Montauk Club of Brooklyn, April 24, 1897.

Mr. President and Gentlemen :

It is the privilege of every man to enjoy a birthday dinner. He generally gives it to himself, and invites a few friends to enjoy it with him. This was notably the custom for the last years of his life of General Sherman. Those unique and original entertainments live as the most pleasant memories of the few who were privileged to enjoy them. But it is a compliment and honor which I profoundly appreciate that so many friends should year after year unite in celebrating, in such hospitable and charming way, my entrance into the world. It develops egotism, not of the large-headed variety, but that healthy enlargement of the heart which cultivates and encourages one's love for and faith in his fellowmen.

From the first this platform has been one of free speech. My hosts are men of all parties, of every walk, profession and business, and of all creeds and religions, and some of them of no religion. Suggestions partly humorous and partly serious have been made here which have aroused inquiries and started agitations leading to notable results in municipal and political affairs.

There are two occasions in a man's life when the broad mantle of charity covers his utterances, and what might be imprudent or indiscreet at other

times is forgiven as an acknowledged liberty of the occasion. One is a speech at his marriage, in response to the toast to his bride and himself, and the other a speech on his birthday, in response to a pledge to his health, long life and happiness. So in reviewing the year I may be free with both comment and confession.

Certainly the past twelve months have been the most revolutionary of the six years; whether the most reactionary, time alone can determine. As a confirmed optimist, I believe that out of the throes of every revolution come better politics, better government, a broader understanding of the underlying principles of our institutions among the people and a permanent advance in prosperity and liberty. In the disappointment which has followed the election, because the impatient temperament of the American people demands instantly the fulfillment of promises and prophecies and results which can only come with new policies and their practical workings, we have discovered that nothing prospers but prosperity.

I have been an active worker upon the stump and in every practical way in politics ever since I was a voter. Only once before in any presidential canvass have I found old-time friends and foes working together for the same candidate, as was the case in the last canvass, both among those who supported McKinley and those who followed Bryan.

In looking calmly and philosophically over the past three years, and especially the past few months, one is impressed with the thought that as the world grows more practical it becomes more sentimental;

that as the romance period vanishes and the knight-errant is no longer a hero, but a clown, the sordid aspirations of the world for bread and butter, for comfortable living, for the accumulation of fortune, are moved more by the imagination than by the mind. A hundred years of coal as fuel, followed by fifty years of inventions which could be utilized and moved by cheap combustion, followed by the utilization of electricity for instantaneous communication around the globe, culminated suddenly, like the bursting of the cap from a volcano, in world-wide business catastrophies and calamities. Old methods, old handicrafts, the skill of the experienced artisan, the calculations of the farmer, and the forecast of the business man, were nullified or neutralized. Forty per cent. of the capital of the world was lost in machinery rendered worthless and products and enterprises which had become useless by an evolution more rapidly than the possibility of adjustment to its new condition. All civilized nations have felt the force of these radical changes of the utilization of power, which so enormously increased and cheapened production, and of the quick contact of the products of semi-barbarous peoples, whose labor counts for little, competing in the markets with the products of those whom civilization and liberty have taught how to live. The adjustment has taken less than five years, against fifty years of evolution and revolution. The new era has furnished multiplied employments and taught new trades, so that prosperity has generally followed distress. Certainly the great industrial nations like Great Britain, Germany and France, though they suffered severely for

the three years before, have not been so prosperous for a decade as during the past year. Then why do we halt? We have more accumulated wealth than any other nation, we have seventy millions of people, whose intelligence, energy and enterprise put us in the front rank among nations.

Our undeveloped resources are incalculable in their capacity to support great populations in comfort and increase our national power. The South is as yet scarcely touched in its agricultural possibilities and mineral wealth. The arid territory under scientific and government irrigation is to furnish homes for millions, while the Pacific Slope presents ideal conditions for that paradise which has been the dream of the Utopian for centuries—easy living and opportunities for intellectual life upon ample income from a few acres. While no nation approaches us in these elements of prosperity, they prosper, but we as yet are struggling with industrial and financial difficulties. It is transparent that the obstacles are not in our material, our natural, our developed, our prospective or our educational conditions. The older countries, so fearfully handicapped as they are with debts and standing armies and threatening wars and congested populations, have adjusted themselves to the revolution and the evolution of steam, electricity and invention, because they did not have to struggle with the tools of exchange, with the fundamental principles of business and finance. We are like the superbly-equipped gladiator, who is sure of success, but who, in a contest with swords, hesitates whether he shall use a club or gloves. We have a banking system,

with the government as a partner, which fails to properly distribute to every section of the country the currency, and which puts the government and its credit at the mercy of Wall street flurries and gigantic speculations, and we have a continuous and undecided battle about our currency which casts a disastrous doubt in all the markets of the world upon old securities and new loans, so much needed for our development. We have every basis for credit, every condition for business, every requirement for prosperity, even if the worst should come out of our muddle of finance and of currency. But the imagination of the hard-headed capitalist and money-lender, banker and financier, arouses the fears and so sways his judgment that they all say: "We will let our money lie idle, or we will invest it where the returns are the smallest, rather than venture it upon the uncertainties of depreciation by government action or panic, because the government will persist in being a banker and may not be able to redeem its notes in gold." Give us an automatic system, by which the remotest parts of the country would, under business conditions, find the currency necessary for their wants; give us an assurance that our financial system shall be in harmony with the established standards of civilized countries; give us revenue sufficient to meet every necessity of the government; let the government remit to legitimate channels, under proper safeguards, our mediums of circulation, and the stamping, rearing and impatient steeds of prosperity, loosed from these halters and hobbles, will bear a great people upon the chariot

of progress to unused heights, prosperity and happiness.

Instead of solving our problem by demonstrated processes, the acuteness and long continuance of our industrial depression have created temporarily a sentiment, cropping out all over the country, and finding expression in our Legislatures and in our courts, that property is a crime and capital a curse. The tie-up of an enterprise, or the crippling of a vast machinery of employment, which distributes money into numberless beneficent channels, is held as a blessing, while suggestion and effort remain dormant for the creation of conditions which will bring about that union of capital and labor, that extreme activity of both by which capital eagerly seeks the assistance of labor, and labor finds its full employment and reward, by which the avenues are once more opened where American opportunity beckons American energy, ambition and genius for affairs to thrift, competence and fortune.

As the result of legislation and interpretation, a blow has been struck at the railway system of the country, and through it at our internal commerce, which the railway managers are doing their best to meet and obviate its most injurious effects. On this point a few figures may be interesting. The railways of the country pay out and distribute from their treasuries annually three times as much money as does the United States government. The direct expenditures to their employes, and to those who produce the coal, oil, rails, fishplates, spikes, ties, cars and locomotives, support two millions of men, whose families number about ten millions more.

During the recent campaign I traveled and spoke to enormous audiences all over the Western States. I found that there exists in many parts of the country a singular and intense hostility to New York and to New Yorkers. It grows hotter as it approaches the great continental divide, and disappears on the fruitful slopes of the golden coast. It is the outgrowth of the craze against the results of thrift, intelligence and prosperity. When one becomes familiar with the great and disastrous change which has taken place in the agricultural conditions of this vast area, he can not help sympathizing with the man who can find no purchaser for his farm and no living market for the products of his farm. Under such conditions it is not the workingman who becomes a socialist and a believer in every form of paternalism, but it is the man of small property, whether invested in the farm, or any kind of business which he has accumulated by great industry and rigid economies, and for which he cannot get a legitimate return. You or I, gentleman, if in a similar situation, would be fighting whomever and whatever seemed to be the enemy of our community or of our state. The vast industrial population of our commonwealth of New York disappears, to a distant people suffering so long from these business calamities, behind the glitter and the splendor and the gorgeoussness, enormously exaggerated by picture and description, of the palaces, the picture galleries, the services of plate, the banquets, the balls, the yachts and the extravagant pleasures of the wealthy of the metropolis.

I curiously investigated the antipathy to railway men in politics, which was so strong in 1888 that the chairman of one of the western state delegations at the Chicago Republican National Convention informed me that from president to brakeman every man in the employment of the railroad was debarred from public service, open to all other occupations, as a public enemy. There are a million railway voters in the United States, and enough of them in every state, if they cared to act together, to vindicate their manhood or assert their rights as citizens, to change the politics of the state. A distinguished statesman said to me: "We want the votes of you railroad men; we like to have those of you who can speak, go upon the platform, and we especially love the contributions of those of you who can afford to give, but as candidates for office before the people, or for positions after election, we are afraid of you." "But," I said, "you seem to make an exception in favor of some railroad men." His answer was: "Yes, but not those who have made their companies business and financial successes. If the manager or managers of a railway have made it insolvent, and put it in the hands of a receiver, they are eligible, because we think they can be regarded as the enemies of capital."

But, gentlemen, there is no power on earth, of Congress or of legislatures, bad laws on the statute book or worse ones to be put there, which can long restrain American prosperity. Only let us know what the conditions are to be, and we will meet them, however bad; only give us a rest on any line for four years, and we will make that line a success.

The productive energies of the United States can be kept idle only a little longer. It may be the concert of Europe turning to a caterwaul; it may be the unexpected in some great department of industry spreading to all others, but whatever the motive power, in spite of everything, we shall suddenly find ourselves again enjoying industrial prosperity.

And now, to relieve the tension and contribute to the hilarity of the hour and the gaiety of nations, let us review the political experiences of the year. Though charged with both, I have neither a big head nor a sore one. One morning, on going out after my recent illness, I found that I could not get my hat on my head. I called my family and said, "The adulation of the press and the incense of applause, which is all that you have read to me while I was sick, has produced its natural result, and I have a swelled head." These practical-minded guardians sent for the doctor, who pronounced it belladonna poisoning, from atropine, which had been put in my eye, and said that the swelling was all on the outside.

When General Woodford and I were in Washington, just before the inauguration, we discovered that there were two places assigned to everybody—missions or omissions. I remember Mr. Greeley storming about in great rage because witty Jim McQuade said that while Horace had made many Presidents, and more reputations, his reward had been to be the "Permanent Secretary of the Exterior, in charge of the Thermometer."

I have been offered by Presidents cabinet positions and foreign missions, and my party in the state has tendered me, at various times, every honor in its

gift. Therefore I know from experience that neither republics, nor politicians, nor parties are ungrateful, nor can I be charged with anything but giving a bit of philosophy for the guidance of posterity in the few experiences I am about to tell you. Our people, as a people, love office, and seek it with avidity. In party conventions nominations go, as a rule, with great impartiality to those who have political value and political sagacity. In appointments, however, the appointing power, by the very necessity of the conditions which surround a President or a Governor, is moved largely by personal considerations, personal acquaintance and the confidences of personal contact. I have had two experiences which charmingly illustrate this principle, both of which occurred when I was a young man. While still in the law office where I had studied after my admission to the bar, I spent two months upon the stump in the presidential canvass. At its close I sat one night in the Delavan House, at Albany, with two most successful platform orators, who had been three months canvassing—witty and eloquent Jim Nye and eloquent General Bruce. “Well,” said Bruce, “Jim, what will we get?” Nye said: “We have worked too hard to get anything. It is the man who sits on the fence and criticises the worker who demonstrates his fitness for place.” Neither of them got anything by appointment, but Bruce was frequently honored by the voters of New York, and Nye, moving to Nevada, came back to the United States Senate to give to that state a national and an international reputation. After the enactment of the international revenue laws, the able old lawyer

with whom I studied thought it would be a good idea for me to combine in the firm politics with law, by becoming an assessor of internal revenue. All other candidates retired, and the whole power of the state was put in the hands of the Judge, who went to Washington. The President said: "This appointment seems perfectly clear. The support is unanimous. I have heard something of the services and eloquence of this young man, and I will make the appointment." After some further conversation, he said: "By the way, what counties are in your district?" At the mention of Westchester, he remarked: "Well, I am very sorry, but I promised that place yesterday." As the party powers in the state and congressional district had presented no one but myself, the Judge inquired, "To whom?" The President named the man, when the delegation said in astonishment, "Why, he is a Democrat, and has always been, and vigorously opposed your election!" "Yes," said the President, "but years ago, though a perfect stranger, at a Western hotel, he nursed a near relative of mine through an attack of the smallpox, when everybody else fled, and, from the character of that service, I think him to be a man who would properly and faithfully fill this position." The nominee speedily changed his politics, and proved to be an efficient officer. To test the loyalty of Johnson, the two Senators and the delegation in Congress, the State Committee, the Governor and the Republican members of the Legislature pressed upon the President my nomination for the Collector of the Port of New York. The position was more important then than now. The emolu-

ments were \$150,000 a year in fees, and the patronage made the collector largely the arbiter of the party organization in the State of New York. It also gave him great influence in the Senate and House of Representatives. The President sent for Secretary of State Seward, Senator Morgan and Representative Henry J. Raymond on Sunday morning and said to them, "This presentation is so phenomenal that I have concluded to appoint Mr. Depew, and I sent for you to inform you and to say that the nomination would be transmitted to the Senate to-morrow morning." He even went so far as to have the papers made out and signed. The next morning, early, Professor Davies, of West Point, who was urging his brother, the distinguished Chief Justice of our Court of Appeals, for the place, hearing of this, got access to the White House, and persuaded Johnson to defer action. Soon after came the trouble over the Civil Rights bill between the President and Congress, and six months later the President appointed to the place Mr. Smyth, a successful merchant of New York, who, like most of his associates, was an active critic of politics and politicians, but seldom took enough interest in elections to vote, and had no attachments which were binding to any party.

That a foreign mission is not a bed of roses or a decoration which can always be worn with increasing pleasure, I can establish by a story which I never before have publicly told. I found on the steamer going to Europe one summer that brilliant advocate and eccentric genius, Emory Storrs. Every such man has a fad and the fad of Storrs was to have three hundred and sixty-five different colored neck-

ties, one for each day in the year. He was going abroad for the first time. He had been disappointed in securing the position of Attorney-General, but the President had immensely gratified him by signing a passport, given by the State Department and written on parchment, commending him as a distinguished citizen to the representatives of our government all over the world, and also giving him a commission as special envoy to treat with the British government upon the regulations which they had made against the introduction of American cattle. Storrs would come on deck every day, in the afternoon—for Neptune was his superior on the ocean, and demanded from him frequent tribute—wearing a new necktie, and taking out of his pocket a waterproof envelope, produce from it the passport and his commission, solemnly read both of them to me, and then inquire what I thought would be the effect of these documents, when exhibited abroad, upon the worn-out monarchies and effete aristocracies of the Old World. Then would follow a series of those inimitable anecdotes, inimitably told, for which Storrs was famous. On the last day of the voyage, as we were sailing into the port of Liverpool, Storrs, repeating this performance, said: “It is not the worn-out monarchies and effete aristocracies of Europe that I am after, but it is old Lowell. I understand that he never entertains Americans. I am going to make him give me a dinner and let me select the guests, or teach him that ‘there is a God in Israel.’” James Russell Lowell was mortified and mad that the functions of the minister of the United States, or any

part of them, should be transferred to this peripatetic diplomat, and vigorously denounced Storrs for his bad manners, when I sat beside him a few nights afterwards at dinner. Nevertheless Storrs carried his point, and when Lowell asked him, in fear and trembling, whom he wanted to meet, supposing it would be the royalties and the ambassadors and other impossibilities, to his delight and astonishment Storrs requested him to secure, as far as possible, Tyndall, Huxley, Lecky, Tennyson and other great lights of science and literature, because he desired to meet, as he said, "Gentlemen of equal and congenial intellectual equipment." I did not hear of this at the time, but Storrs was again on the ship on our way home, and I said, "Storrs, did you get that dinner?" "Well," said he, "I will tell you. After three weeks I left London, and went upon the Continent. I was in that little room in the gallery at Dresden, absorbed, enraptured, almost translated before that marvelous Madonna of Raphael. The room was crowded. Suddenly I felt that the crowd was looking at me, and not at the picture. I turned and said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, I have come three thousand miles to see this inspired painting, the most wonderful work of the brush the world has ever known. I suppose you came for the same purpose, and yet you are looking at me. If it is my clothes, they were made in Chicago.' A gentleman stepped forward and said to me, 'Mr. Storrs, you are more interesting to us Americans than any painting, however famous. You are the only American to whom our minister to England, Mr. Lowell, ever gave a dinner.'" To make a good story, Storrs did great

injustice to the most brilliant of our ambassadors to Great Britain, and the one who has left a reputation in London which increases with the years. Mr. Lowell was not only a brilliant ambassador, but was always a representative American.

The hour grows late, and we enter upon the experiences of another year. I trust that for our country and for ourselves it may be one of prosperity and happiness. I never began the day after my birthday in more buoyant spirits or in more hopeful mood than I do this one. I thank Heaven that, in the accidents of birth, I was ushered into the world when it was still echoing with the songs of Easter, the songs of the glorious Resurrection and of the promise of the sweeter and better life. In the period when the green grass hides and makes one forget the ravages of winter, when the trees are bursting into verdure, when the flowers and fruits are budding, when the birds are mating and the whole world is full of joy, of love and of hope, a man becomes an optimist in spite of himself, and in spite of anything that may happen to him. I know not what may be your faith, gentlemen, and care not, because I accord to every man the right to enjoy his beliefs as I do mine, but my sainted mother, brought up in the strictest school of Calvinism, modified it in her sweet and angelic way. She believed that everything of importance which happened was a special act of Providence, and that while it might seem doubtful or dark for a moment, the compensation was sure to come. My experience in life, and my observations, have taught me the absolute truth of this doctrine. I see every little while men break down who are ten, twenty or

thirty years younger than myself, because of concentration and anxiety; because of work and worry upon one line, in one way, on one thing. Work is health; worry is death. Life is an enjoyment of the work by which you live, and then a larger enjoyment of the work by which you contribute, as best you may, no matter under what discouragements or what criticisms, to the living, the enjoyment and the health of others. "Variety is the spice of life," is an old adage. Variety is generous living and longevity.

Address of Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, LL. D., at
the Birthday Dinner given to him by the
Montauk Club of Brooklyn, April 23, 1898.

Gentlemen :

It is a compliment as unique as it is gratifying that several hundred gentlemen, representing every department of American thought and activity, should for seven years in succession, in constantly increasing numbers, tender me a birthday dinner. Coming here as you do—clergymen, judges, lawyers, doctors, journalists, men of letters and men of business—to devote an evening to good-fellowship and some serious reflection, you illustrate that we Americans can escape from the shop and enjoy the pleasures of life.

We have all of us listened to speeches nominating candidates for office and congratulating them upon their election, addresses presenting some significant gift or celebrating some honor which has come to the recipient, and we have either felt or philosophized upon the emotions of the man who is thus rhetorically decorated, but I take it that the blood never feels the electric touch of joy so keenly or conveys it so rapidly to the brain as when, with enthusiasm and spontaneity, the crowd rise and joyously greet him with that homely but most genuine of choruses, "For he is a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny."

Seven years are said to result in a complete physiological change in a human being, but, thank Heaven, it is only matter which changes. The Spanish adage, if we may quote from a Spaniard at this time, still holds true: "Old wine to drink, old friends to trust, and old books to read." It is appreciation, landation and gratification like that which you give to-night which promote perpetual youth and fence out old age.

Many subjects have been suggested at these annual gatherings. Some of them have been fruitful in political consequences and in educational discussion. The past seven years have been rich and revolutionary in the story of our country and the experience of our lives. The pace of progress has been too rapid for the world to adjust itself to the conditions which it has created. The war of conflicting opinions for remedies to meet the crises produced by the rapidity of modern development has produced great economic disasters and revealed the possibility of greater ones. The lesson of our whole experience has been that the American people possess resources in themselves and in their country to meet and overcome adverse conditions such as no people were ever blessed with before. The imagination cannot grasp the depth, the breadth and the height of happiness which might have been attained if the obstacles in our way had not existed. The nemesis which halts ambition, humbles pride, and perpetually reminds humanity that it is mortal, since the beginning of these celebrations in 1892 has exhibited its power upon our enjoyment of the marvelous development which has been the pride and the boast of the last half century.

We had lived in the exaltation of the results of invention and discovery. The best of all the preceding centuries seemed to have accumulated little compared with what has been done in the last wonderful fifty years by steam, electricity, discovery and invention. But this slow-going, conservative world of ours could not immediately adjust its diverse races, its different civilizations and the historic developments of its inhabitants in the several hemispheres, islands, and climates to the instantaneous competition and neighborhood of conflicting interests produced by the cable, the railroad and the steamship. When China and Canada, India and the United States, Egypt and South America, Russia and Australia, with rates of wages running from three cents to three dollars a day, the cost of living from comparatively nothing to figures demanding large income for support, the hours of work from eight to sixteen a day, the intelligence of the common school and high civilization as against semi-barbarism and ignorance, were brought in contact and competition in every market, the world's machinery was thrown out of gear. An industrial and financial cataclysm threatened the commerce, the capital and the employment of the nations. No country escaped the effects of the panic produced by this contact with the yellow man and the black man, and the products of their labor in the field and factory, and with the currency which was their medium of exchange. The nations of Europe, with their longer experience, their more settled methods of business, and the solid basis of sound money upon which their credit was founded, speedily recovered and adjusted themselves

to the new conditions. Since then there has been unexampled prosperity in Great Britain and on the continent. We have been struggling to make some adjustment and enter, as we can, more successfully upon the highways of trade and prosperity, but our difficulties have been exceptional and unusual. Our very difficulties have illustrated the elasticity, the strength and the hope of American prosperity. We have had a continuing currency crisis and the commercial disturbances and partial paralysis of two wars. President Cleveland's Venezuelan message and the panic which ensued suspended all the activities of the country for a considerable period, and gave every enterprise a setback, or so crippled it that years were required to repair the damage. There is no doubt that the time had come for a declaration of the full meaning of the Monroe Doctrine. There is no doubt but that the emphatic assertion of the protecting interest of the United States over the weaker republics of the two Americas was notice to Europe of our position which will prevent future interference and trouble. Thus, as we look back upon the incident, President Cleveland performed a significant service for his country.

In the same manner events have culminated in Cuba and with Spain in such a way as compelled action by the United States. The conduct of the negotiations by the President, and the dignified and impregnable position in which he has placed his country, are at once a source of patriotic pride and of future safety for the United States. A new and glorious chapter in American diplomacy, the humanity of the American people and the mission of liberty

on this side the Atlantic has been written and acted by President McKinley.

All our power and resources must be energized for a short, thorough and decisive campaign and victory in the war upon which we have entered. But with the Cuban irritation, which has imperilled our interests, threatened our tranquility and been a constant menace to our peace for half a century, allayed, by Spain out and Cuba free, the future is brilliant with promise and hope for our country. The nations will understand an American position which the United States can maintain by overwhelming power. No complications upon which hostilities could be based can happen thereafter within the sphere of our influence in the western hemisphere. The advice of Washington to his countrymen becomes both prophetic and mandatory—prophetic in the enlargement of its original meaning, that we should not become entangled with foreign powers by excluding from the word foreign everything American; mandatory in its prohibition of our meddling with the affairs of peoples on the other side of the great ocean, and confining our energies and our minds to the development of the destiny which God intended should be beneficently worked out by isolation of the North American continent and adjoining islands from neighborhood, association and traditions with the Old World.

Our home difficulties and dangers brushed away, the mission of America is pre-eminently for peace. I know that this sentiment is vigorously opposed. I have a friend who is an earnest, enthusiastic and conscientious jingo. He is not of the noisy and ora-

torical sort, who try to promote war to be fought out by their neighbors while they stand in safe places and shout, but he asks nobody to follow where he is not willing to lead. My friend has been a gallant soldier, and has performed excellent service in public life. He believes that the national spirit, higher patriotism and pure and unselfish love of country must be stimulated by at least one war in each generation. He thinks that the industrial disturbances and distresses which follow hostility are like the spring doses of blue pill in the old practice, necessary to purge the body politic from gross materialism. Following the lines of the old practice, he believes that occasional blood-letting is necessary to political health. I say to my other and oratorical jingo friend, "Suppose you bring about your war in each generation—will you enlist?" He says, "Of course not; my mission is that of the statesman—to advise." "But," I persisted, "suppose your countrymen follow your example. What then?" "Then," he said, "the Government should draft the beggars." But my friend, the Colonel, says, "I will head the enrollment with my own name and move at once into camp." I differ *in toto* from this theory of the mission of the people of the United States. I believe that the true greatness of our nation will be manifested by education, art, science and industry. Let the conditions in our western hemisphere be established as I have indicated, and then let our financial situation be removed from the stage of often tried and as often exploded experiment unworthy our genius for commerce and finance, and our past, wonderful as it is, will seem but the stepping-stone to the greater fu-

ture. There is no reason why we should have a panic inside of every decade which sweeps thousands into bankruptcy and hundreds of thousands into pauperism. There is no reason why every flurry of politics at Washington should suspend the purchasing power of the nation. There is no reason why the government should be at the mercy of speculators on its credit, and be subject to an accident to its specie payments of its notes which in a night and a day stops orders to the factory, and then from the factory stops orders to the mine, because the merchant dare not lay in stock and the customer dare not buy. We have experienced in the last seven years nearly an annual panic or industrial revolution producing misery and distress almost as great as those which are suffered in war.

England spends a thousand millions of dollars a year to purchase food for her labor. We raise all the food needed for our seventy millions of inhabitants, and send abroad to other nations more than a thousand millions of dollars' worth of our surplus. The product of our factory meets all our necessities and most of our luxuries, and the perfection of our machinery, the power given us in such abundance by nature, and the intelligence of our artisans are opening for our manufactures the markets of the world. The disturbance of these relations and conditions throws out of employment millions of people and puts into the dire distress of poverty, with all that means of deprivation of comfort and of the pleasures of life, many other millions who are dependent upon the wage-earners for their support. Call it gross materialism, call it cowardice, name it what you

please, I am heart and soul for the policy which energizes the forces of production and promotes national and especially individual prosperity and happiness. Keep the path clear by the application of the ordinary principles of prudence, thrift and, I will add, patriotism, then I predict that our country will be more than a marvel; it will be a miracle. The farmer can lift his mortgage, and make his home the castle which neither the sheriff nor care can enter; the workingman can own his home and feel the independence of an unencumbered hearthstone, and every occupation, every employment, will be seeking those who are willing and capable. The successes of the men of mark in the past, which are the guides and inspirations of the boys of to-day and of the future, will be repeated in more frequent examples. This is not the peace of the army of Hannibal, losing stamina, nerve and courage amidst the luxuries of Southern Italy; it is not the peace of sloth nor of enervating idleness, but it is the peace which makes strong, healthy and well-developed men and women; the peace which builds upon industry and hope, disciplined, cultured and well-filled minds; the peace which makes the nation so consciously strong that with no derogation of dignity it can go to the limit of patience to preserve peace and promote amity and friendship among nations; so really powerful that if the conditions are intolerable, and a war of right and justice must be maintained, its might will be as resistless as its cause is right.

Spanish history presents the interesting condition that she has never been conquered by an army of invasion, and, with the exception of Cortes and Pizarro

in the New World, has rarely, if ever, succeeded in her foreign wars. Her eighty-three years of contest in the Netherlands ended in defeat, and her famous armada was lost in the British Channel. Her contests with her colonies have always ended in disaster. Her wars have been frequent, and most of them for aggression or oppression.

A curious incident in her history illustrates that war seldom settles anything, and especially illustrates that any nation which goes to war should be sure that the facts upon which it bases its action are impregnable. When Walpole was Prime Minister of Great Britain, the relations between Great Britain and Spain were strained on the question of right of search upon the ocean. Captain Jenkins, who was master of an English schooner, arriving home reported that while near the coast of Cuba he was captured by a Spanish cruiser; that the Spaniards cut off one of his ears, and then let him go with his ship. Jenkins had carried this ear around for some years wrapped up in cotton to exhibit to audiences. The House of Commons took up the matter, and Captain Jenkins testified before its committee that, when his ear was cut off, he commended his soul to God and his cause to his country. The phrase took like wildfire, and all England was in a blaze. The Spaniards vigorously denied any knowledge of or connection with Jenkins or his ear. Walpole, the Prime Minister, did his best to allay the excitement, to have the matter further investigated and to settle the trouble by diplomacy. Burke called the story "The Fable of Jenkins' Ear." Parliament, however, by an overwhelming vote,

promptly declared war against Spain. The war raged for three years. It cost thousands of lives, destroyed millions of dollars of property and added millions to the national debt, upon which the people of England have been paying interest ever since. Peace was finally concluded by the combined efforts of all the nations of Europe. Then Walpole, the Prime Minister, in order to justify his opposition to the war, made an exhaustive investigation to discover who had cut off Jenkins' ear, but where, when and how it was lost is still unsettled.

One happy effect of the present crisis has been the removal of prejudice and the promotion of a better understanding between the United States and England. The friendship of the English people for us during the Spanish controversy has done more to arouse like sentiments on this side of the ocean than anything in the history of the two countries. America and Great Britain are nearer to-day to that alliance of English-speaking peoples which has been the idea of many statesmen and the dream of all men of letters of both countries than at any time in a hundred years.

This is a bright and beautiful world, and in all ages men and women have tried to find out how to escape misery and to secure happiness. Observation and reflection have taught me that happiness is possible to everybody who seeks it rightly. No one at least is anxious to climb the Golden Stairs, although we are often quite willing that many whom we know should try the experiment. I heard Horace Greeley once remark to a clerical collector, who had interrupted his composition of an editorial, and was de-

manding a contribution on the ground that it would save several millions of human beings from going to hell, that he would not give a d— cent, because there did not half enough go there now.

Whenever I have spoken of the enjoyments of life, and the pleasures possible in every condition, the criticism has been made that my point of view was too narrow, and from a basis of continued life-long, personal prosperity which unfitted me to understand the limitations of the ordinary wage-earner. This is not the case. Happily for me my father, a successful man, with an iron will and a fixed purpose, having given me a university education and a profession, threw me out, with the remark that I would never have another dollar from him, except in his will. But for that apparent cruelty on his part we would not be here to-night. There was not a hard line possible in the experience of early struggles which did not come to me. The old gentleman would sit in his room with the tears rolling down his cheeks at my difficulties and hardships, but he never relented nor rendered one particle of assistance. Twice, through over-confidence in friends and a fatal weakness for indorsements, my accumulations have been swept away, and a load of debt assumed. It was after all these struggles and misfortunes that a rule of life was suggested, the results of which have been so happy that they easily form a code for enjoying existence applicable to every condition in life. Old Epictetus, the stoic philosopher, has laid the world under the deepest obligations. A man of genius, cultured and educated, the fortunes of war had made him a slave to a brutal Roman. It irritated the

Roman that a man in such condition could still get vastly more pleasure out of life than he did with all his wealth and the opportunities given him by being a favorite at the court of Nero. Seizing the philosopher and slave by the leg one day he commenced twisting it, when Epictetus said: "Stop. You will break that leg and injure your property."

The leg of Epictetus was broken, but his cheerful stoicism conquered. He was given his liberty, and founded one of the great schools of antiquity. The underlying principle of his faith and teaching is that God knows what is good for us better than we do. Therefore, doing the best we can to attain our end, let us accept his disposition as the wisest, and be cheerful and happy whatever our lot. Most of us remember with veneration and affection a sainted mother, deeply imbued with the sombre doctrines of Calvin. By the sweetness of her nature she gave to this same sentiment, reproduced in another form in the Genevan theologian, the beautiful and inspiring suggestion that both our successes and our disappointments were special providences working out for us the career to which we were adapted. I know that all of you can recall in your own experiences crises in your lives which demonstrated the truth of this principle. Several times you have been at the cross-roads of a career, bent upon moving to this place or that, upon joining this firm or that corporation, upon accepting this position rather than another, upon making this investment or that. Something prevented your accomplishing your purpose, and you were in the depths of gloom sometimes and sometimes despair; but as you look back now you

find that had you been able to carry out your scheme or purpose, it would have so changed as to have practically ended your prospects in life, and the choice which, against your will, you were compelled to make, is the one that brings you here to-night, not only for this occasion, but to celebrate with thankfulness and joy the good things which have come to you in life. Certainly my own career is rich in great disappointments which have proved significant blessings.

The best informed, all-round man, and the most contented I ever knew, was a barber. He was a success as a barber; he would have failed as a merchant. His shop kept him comfortably and furnished a surplus which, with great discrimination, he invested in a library, every book in which and every author in which was his intimate and familiar friend. He was the encyclopedia of his neighborhood to the preachers, the lawyers, and the students; and instead of wearying his customers with voluble suggestions as to his patent for restoring their hair on the outside of their heads, no customer ever left the chair without getting something of value lodged inside of his head.

Another man whom I watched from early boyhood to middle age was a carman in my native village who had a vital faith in the doctrine that whatever is is for the best and comes from on high, and though his troubles were many, his song in the street, as he trundled by with his load, was an anthem of joy ringing through the houses and fairly causing the clams in the bottom of his wagon to open their shells.

His infectious happiness, loudly proclaimed in the weekly prayer-meeting, lifted saints and sinners out of themselves to a closer contact with their better selves and a clearer vision of the Pearly Gates and the Golden Streets.

One more instance is an old friend more than a quarter of a century my senior, who discovered thirty years ago that he had accumulated enough for his moderate wants. Investing it in securities which, though yielding low rates of interest, could by no financial convulsion cease to pay, he has resisted the most tempting offers to double his fortune. Released from the cares of his profession he has devoted his life to congenial literary pursuits, to music and art and travel. The most welcome of guests and cheery of companions, and hale and hearty near the nineties, he rejoices that he did not die as the fool dieth in the sixties.

I have been often told that humor, anecdote, and wit are fatal to political progress or business appreciation. We all know that the solemn, the dull, and the obtuse man captures by the impenetrable dignity which walls in his mind and imagination popular plaudits for his supposed wisdom and strength of character. But looking back over my sixty-odd years, rather than anything of honor or fame or applause that might have come from playing a false part, I rejoice in the belief that I never have consciously caused anyone to shed a tear, and have done my best, whether it was successful or not, to make people happy and cause them to laugh. The man who can honestly laugh with his whole soul and his

whole being will never betray a friend, never defraud a creditor, never cheat his neighbor, never deceive a woman, but will go through the world making friends and, more difficult still, keeping all the friends he makes. Carking care, of whom Horace speaks as always trying to ride behind us or on the same ship, has a hard time of it if we are determined to be cheerful and make others cheerful. It is possible to carry home some good thing every day. It is a duty. The women of the family may have had great vexations and the children may be fretful with studies and other troubles. I have not for years passed the twenty-four hours at the office, or on the street, or on the cars that did not furnish the little drama or farce which carried off the home dinner and made the air ripple in the library after dinner. They need not be worthy of Thackeray, or Dickens, or Douglas Jerrold, or Artemus Ward, or Mark Twain. The honest intent gives infinite zest to an effort in the home circle. For instance, a Tammany Senator, who belongs to the school of Mr. Bailey, the Democratic leader in the House of Representatives, and had never worn a dress suit, comes into my office after the edict had gone forth that no Democrat could hope for recognition in New York unless he had on a dress suit in the evening, and says: "Mr. Depew, I went into the Democratic Club last night and one of our people, whose favor I value, said to me, 'Senator, I never saw you so well dressed in my life.' I said to him, 'Does it fit?' 'Splendidly.' 'All right in the back?' 'Yes.' 'Then I'll buy it.' "But," the Senator sadly said, "when I went into

the dining-room the master of ceremonies remarked severely, 'What are you doing with them tan shoes?' Hully gee, Mr. Depew, don't tan shoes go among the Four Hundred with a dress suit?" Two shopping ladies from the Oranges are discussing loudly in an adjoining seat on the elevated car at which of the department stores the best lunch can be had, and with the lack of sequence produced by constant shopping, their controversy ends, not on the lunch, but on the day on which they had it. One says that she always pays her bills in checks, because then the check is a receipt. The other says, "I don't bother about giving my name and address, and maybe have the things come home all wrong, but I pay in cash and carry the bundle away with me." The first throws up her hands in horror and says, "How do you know they will not send out to you for collection a second bill?" It is difficult to estimate how much daily happiness is increased if the order is peremptory that, after you get home in the afternoon and until the next morning, no bad news shall be revealed or discussed. The tendency of the female mind is to gather news, and most of it relates to the personal misfortunes of friends and acquaintances. If told at the dinner or in the early evening, with the sympathetic picturesqueness characteristic of the feminine artist in word-painting, we have a funeral instead of a feast. But if the warning finger—which means the taboo—rises whenever the death, or the divorce, or the bankruptcy or the scandal shows its head, good digestion attends the simplest as well as the richest fare, and sleep, which means health and life, follows a bright and joyous evening.

We all have fads and know it not though they are familiar to others. Let our friends practice theirs without rebuke. They may bore us at times, but think of the exquisite pleasure they give those who are the victims of these harmless lunacies. Listen for the hundredth time to the adventure or the story and remember that Joe Jefferson's Rip Van Winkle or Booth's Richelieu never tire. Your reward will come in the happiness you give, and often in substantial form. When I was a young lawyer in Peekskill a New York dandy visiting the village cut me out. The fad of the father of the young lady was a theory which would have given the victory to Napoleon at Waterloo. I had heard the story often as a prelude to the love scene which followed the old gentleman's retirement for the night. When my rival appeared one evening I said, "By the way, Mr. Brown, our city friend has never heard your very original and remarkable story of Waterloo." When I left at eleven, Grouchy, having defeated Blucher, was just deploying his army in the British rear, and Mr. Fifth Avenue never called again.

I do not intend to tell stories to-night. I have had a warning. We are putting four new stories upon the Grand Central Depot. The other day a careless workman let a brick fall from the top. It landed on the platform just outside my window, banged through the glass and missed my head by a sixteenth of an inch. Professor Hadley remarked, "Even the Grand Central Depot will not stand four of your stories."

When Pyrrhus was flushed with victory a philo-

sophic friend said to him, "When you have conquered Italy, what then?" "I shall conquer Africa." "And when you have conquered Africa, what then?" "I shall conquer the world." "And when you have conquered the world, what then?" "I shall take my ease and be merry." "Well," said his friend, "why not take your ease and be merry now?" Gentlemen, we are all of us engrossed in the cares of business; we are all of us absorbed in the conduct of our affairs because of the hot competitions of modern life. But that man is more successful in business, has a better judgment in critical affairs of the bank, a readier apprehension of the kaleidoscopic perils of railroad-ing and a clearer grasp of the problems of law or theology or medicine who can find time, and will find time, no matter what the nature of his vocation, to "take his ease and be merry, now." The fools who give the twenty-four hours to business, and boast of it, may criticise the man who can expel business from his mind and enjoy his books, his friends, his club, the theatre, the opera, the dinner, or the dance, but the cheerful man gets dividends out of life where the other gets trouble. Such people are the Bourbons of business. They neither learn nor forget, but they sometimes get temporary reputations. Some years ago I was on an inspection tour over all of our lines with a party of railroad men. We lived on the car, and all of us worked hard all day, and when darkness interrupted work the card table carried off the evening. Cards do not interest me, and so one night I delivered a lecture to the students of a college in the town where we were stopping, and another

night I spoke at a supper of the Loyal Legion, and another at a Convention of Railway Employees, contributing as best I could to the life of the places we visited. The writers on railway subjects in the press praised the skill and practical talents for their business and the scientific methods of my friends who found rest and recreation in the game, and lamented that such vast interests should be in charge of a theorist and speech-maker like myself. Our daily labors were the same and our methods of spending the evening were different, but no one ever heard of the card-playing amusements of my associates, and my speeches were in the newspapers. It was that prince of utilitarians, Lord Chesterfield, I think, who advised that for success in life good form is better than good character, and appearances than merit.

The gray matter of the brain is like a rubber band. Stretch it continuously and keep it strained and the elasticity goes out of it, and it rots and falls to pieces. Wise judgment must be fertilized by variety, versatility and travel. My graveyard of reminiscence is full of the buried bones of those who gave out and failed in the '30s, the '40s, or the '50s, because they planted by night and reaped by day, because even the church service was simply helping to solve their business problems, and because they sedulously avoided and scrupulously denounced frivolous people like ourselves, who can frivol as we do here tonight.

Gentlemen, the mortuary tables of the men who for eight years have gathered here on my birthday would enrich any life insurance company. None of

us grow old, none of us decay, and our sentiment tonight is, that better than medical faculties and pharmacopoeias and dispensaries and mineral springs are cheerful dispositions, persistently cultivated and kept alive, no matter what the obstacles in their way, and the joys of life extracted from every situation—public, business, domestic and social.

Address of Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, LL. D., at
the Birthday Dinner given to him by the
Montauk Club of Brooklyn, April 22, 1899.

Mr. President and Gentlemen :

Since nobody wishes to die everybody must be glad he was born. It is a good thing to have a birthday, but its pleasure is increased when your friends in this substantial way indicate their joy that you came into the world. Artemus Ward said: "It would have been ten dollars in the pocket of Jefferson Davis if he had never been born." But the only limitation upon natal festivities is the necessity of making a speech. The difficulty increases when the occasion has called together a goodly company, the majority of whom have listened and cheered for eight successive years. Happily for me the life of an American is kaleidoscopic and the history of our country presents a perpetual succession of new and interesting pictures. Certainly the last twelve months form an epoch in the story of nations.

Heretofore you have honored me as a private citizen. But to-night you greet me both as the same old friend and your representative in the Senate of the United States. I shall be most fortunate, if in this new sphere I am able, in a measure, to meet your partial expectations and predictions. Certainly I am absolutely free and untrammled. I am proud of the railway profession in which I have spent my life, but I owe to it no obligations to favor it in any

way or to treat its interests in any other manner as a legislator than all other questions which may come up for action. Public duty is very simple and not in conflict with any honest business. It is that whatever is for the public good, is also for the good of every legitimate trade, occupation and business in the country. My long connection with the work and operations of the railroads has given me a healthy contempt for politicians who believe that they can fool the people by phrases denouncing the work and those engaged in it out of whom they make money in practice. The familiar form is the lawyer who derives his fees and his living from the retainers of corporations, and in legislative halls and on the platform covers them with indiscriminate abuse. Another form is that which makes the vital business of legislation subordinate to stock speculation, the fluctuation of values and the undermining of credit. With an ingenious stock-broker, a shrewd lawyer and a skillful press agent the combination is complete. The bill is introduced, its advent heralded as a public boon and a patriotic effort in the interest of the people. The committee favorably reports, the stock of the company soon goes down, the investors become frightened and throw their holdings upon the market, and the speculators, who have sold short in anticipation of this effect, cover their contracts at a large profit. They then buy again at the panic price, the measure is quietly killed, the stocks and bonds affected resume their normal relation, the speculators are again the winners, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people who could ill afford it are the losers and legislation and legislators are injured

in that essential of government, the confidence of the people.

A hundred years ago the controversy began for and against corporations as a method for the transaction of any business. Alexander Hamilton believed that there were certain functions in the operations of commerce which could not be carried on by individuals, but must be by semipublic corporations. He foresaw that banking and transportation must take this form. He passed through the Legislature the charter of the Bank of New York. Aaron Burr, who was the leader of the opposite party, saw his opportunity, became the antimonopolist champion, assailed this bank charter, then the only corporation in our State, as endangering the liberties of the people and was triumphantly elected to the Legislature. He then procured a charter for a company to meet the popular demand for pure water in New York, and into it he artfully injected a clause under which he and his friends organized the Manhattan Bank, which celebrated its one-hundredth anniversary last week. Burr has left many descendants.

Our platform on these birthdays has always been as frank and free as a talk in the family on all questions of the hour. The flood of eloquence at the Metropolitan Opera House and the Grand Central Palace suggests some subjects, which are not yet party issues, which may be profitably pursued. After reading all the speeches, some good, some indifferent, some bad and some incomprehensible, except on the theory best expressed by the slang phrase of my Bowery

friends that the orator was "talking through his hat," I had this thought: An attack of the grippe this winter ran my pulse down to fifty beats a minute. I found that at fifty beats a minute the heart has not the force to furnish the current which will keep going the wheels of the thinking machinery. My doctor concocted a pill of strychnine, arsenic and other poisons, which, if taken in the right number, brought the pulse up to seventy, and the mental factory had the motive power for its work. If, however, the patient should take an overdose he would climb the Golden Stairs. I thought many of those speakers and many of the writers on these subjects would be benefited by my doctor's pills, and the world would be the gainer if some of them took an overdose.

The general propositions were, that it is a crime to make money and a greater crime to keep it; that we live in an age of the grossest commercialism; that our country has a worse attack than any other; that the worship of the dollar has destroyed public spirit, patriotism, religion, noble aims and high ideals. Shade of Jefferson! These apostles claim to be your disciples. They teach the seventy-five millions of American people who revere your memory that such is the result of the principles, worked out in practice, in the government which you and your immortal associates founded. Madam Rolland, as she stood at the foot of the scaffold waiting to be guillotined by Robespierre and the French revolutionists, exclaimed: "Oh, Liberty, Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" I wonder how many believe all this. I wonder how many who

thus talk and write believe the American people can be brought to endorse these views or that they do not see the nonsense through the flimsy veil of lurid rhetoric. It is an indisputable fact that the whole people of the United States were never so powerful, or so prosperous, or collectively and individually possessed so much in opportunity, in liberty, in education, in employment, in wages, in men who from nothing have become powers in the community, and boys who from poverty have secured education and attained competence, as to-day. A young man who can pay a dollar for a dinner and do no injustice to his family has started successfully in his career. Here are five hundred gentlemen within these walls. There is scarcely one of them who cannot remember the difficulty, the anxieties and the work of securing his first surplus dollar. Everyone of you from that dollar has, because of American conditions and a true conception of American liberty, become a leader in the pulpit, at the bar, in medicine, in journalism, in art, in the management of industries, in the work of firms and corporations and in business of every kind. This assemblage—and its like can be gathered in every state, county, city and village in our country—illustrates that true spirit of commercialism which inspires ambition and makes a career; that true development of American manhood which is ever striving for something better in its material conditions, which has time for the work of the church, for politics, for the public service, for the improvement of the home and the pleasures of and for the family. Out, out upon this miserable pessimism! The 200,000 young men who last April an-

swered the call of the President to enlist and fight for the freedom of Cuba and the million more who wanted to be called are the answers of the youth of our land to the cry of decaying public spirit.

There were the stocks of only two corporations dealt in on the New York Stock Exchange in 1800. There have been the issues of a hundred and sixty new companies put upon the market since the first of January, 1899. Almost every form of industry, outside of agriculture, has drifted into corporations. Most of the money of the country, whether it be the accumulations of capitalists, or the fund left for the support of the wife and the education of the children, or the earnings deposited in the savings bank or put in the life insurance company, is now invested in corporate securities. At least seven-tenths of the capital and eight-tenths of the labor are under the corporate flag. A familiar generalization includes semi public companies like railroads, telegraphs, telephones, gas and electric lights, manufacturing in every form and all kinds of mining. A young man and his partners from small beginnings build up a great business. If a partner dies the business may have to be dissolved. To keep it alive, no matter what may happen to one or more members of the firm, and to prevent the majority freezing out the minority, most of these firms have become corporations, and we have a large number of familiar instances in our city. For the same reason most of the newspapers, though the ownership and control may be in the hands of one man or of a few men, have become corporations. The magnitude of modern business and its hot competitions have evolved also

the trust. I am familiar with one instance illustrating this process. A company—or, rather, a trust—was formed, and, as usual, overcapitalized, with the intention of absorbing the leading factories in a certain product of prime necessity, and then driving what are called the little fellows out of business. The little fellows put their factories into one corporation, capitalizing each at its actual value; the owners became the managers and selected the ablest of their members for the general officers. These men, understanding their business and conducting it themselves in the fight against the over-capitalized trust run by high-salaried officials who had no interest in the business, beat the trust, compelled its surrender and triumphantly vindicated their business sagacity and skill.

This tendency of the times cannot be met by shouting. As the business in this form is of necessity public because done under a public charter the state must exercise a scrutiny which would not be permitted in the conduct of private affairs. The state is bound to protect its people against any enterprise which, under the form of law and its protection, is injurious to the people. It is bound to protect the investor by keeping the electric light of publicity constantly upon all its creations. The vast wealth which has poured into our country because the world has become our debtor apparently exhausted the securities in which money could be profitably invested. Three per cent interest, after the taxes are taken out, leaves little income for the support of the helpless, which every prudent and right-minded man desires to provide. This situation was speedily grasped by

far-sighted and speculative men who have organized the present industrial craze. "Come with us," they cry, "and we can give you five per cent upon our bonds, six per cent upon our preferred stock and an income upon the common only to be gauged by the growth of the country." Three thousand millions of dollars at par of these securities have been floated since the first of January. Some of them doubtless are good, some of them bad and some good as to part of their securities and worthless as to others. The crying need of the hour is for some method by which light shall be let into every one of these corporations or chartered concerns and the public advised of their condition, their operations, their management and their right to live.

Forty years ago a very rich man was looked upon as a demigod. There were very few, they were followed everywhere with admiration, their movements were heralded and they were greeted by admiring crowds. Notwithstanding this cry about money, the time has passed when a man receives public consideration or applause simply because he has money, no matter how much. There are hundreds now who have more than the richest possessed forty years ago. They are judged wholly by the use which they make of their wealth. They are expected to so manage it as to promote and enlarge the enterprises which develop the country, distribute and disseminate money and give employment. They are held to be trustees, and are measured according to their administration of the trust. The church and charity, education and art have claims upon them which they must meet.

Hoarded money has not a tithe of the power nor a particle of the respect which it had forty years ago.

As we advance in life we appreciate more day by day the value of time. With every revolution of the earth there is less left. We must economize it. We who are active in affairs and must meet many people find out who are the enemies and who the friends of our time. The scatter-brain dissipates and the sure-footed man conserves it. The late Leopold Morse, while a member of Congress, was entertained at a big house on Fifth Avenue. A guest said: "Delighted to see you, Morse. Where are you stopping?" Morse replied: "At the St. Cloud Hotel." His friend said: "For Heaven's sake, Morse, don't do that again; that's the San Clou." The next day Morse went into his banker's, who said: "Glad to see you, Morse; where are you stopping?" Morse said, "At the San Clou." The banker said: "Come off your perch. That may do in Boston, but here it's plain English, St. Cloud." Morse, much distressed, was stopped on Wall street soon after by an acquaintance, who said: "Morse, I want to come up and see you this evening; where are you stopping?" Morse answered: "Hanged if I know." Morse should have been sure of himself and stuck to it. The man who ought to be killed after the first half hour is the one who, having made an engagement, uses thirty minutes in developing a matter in which he knows you are interested and then proceeds, having gained, as he thinks, your confidence, to exploit the scheme for which he came. I always turn that man down. A gentleman, who had been a member of Congress, came into my office one day. He first enlarged upon

the railway system of the country; then he spoke of the Vanderbilt lines in the west and the perils they might encounter from competition. Then he sent a roller flying across the floor which developed about five yards of map. He pointed out how a line between certain points would render the Vanderbilt system impregnable and, if in the hands of hostile parties, would destroy it. He wished me to raise for him, or, rather, his railroad, thirty millions of dollars. I said to him: "Do you remember the famous phrase of Pitt after the battle of Austerlitz?" He said indignantly: "I did not come here, Mr. Depew, to listen to any of your jokes, but to save your client's fortune for the niggardly sum of thirty millions of dollars." I said: "Well, do you remember what Pitt said after the battle of Austerlitz?" "No," he said impatiently; "what did he say?" "Well," I replied, "the great English statesman made this remark: 'Roll up the map of Europe.'" Said he, "Do you mean——?" I said "I do." He rolled up the map and then stated his business. Said he: "Will you give me a pass home?"

The sure-footed man is a benefactor. In the pulpit he gives you something to take home to think about and talk over at the Sunday dinner, at the bar he makes the jury in a short time think his way and the judge is influenced by his directness and lucidity. He states his business proposition to you so quickly and so clearly that you know instantly whether you can afford to embark in it or not. He dismisses his board of directors with a ten minute statement which reveals to them the exact condition and true prospects of the company. He tells a story so that

the point punctures and delights you without giving you the horrors of knowing it long before he is through. You sit beside him if you can at dinner, you select him for your companion in travel, you take him into your business if he is free and you make him your executor in your will.

My friends, we pass this way but once. We cannot retrace our steps to any preceding milestone. Every time the clock strikes, it is both the announcement of the hour upon which we are entering and the knell of the one which is gone. Each night memory balances the books and we know before we sleep whether the result is on the right or on the wrong side of our account. In some measure we can meet the injunction of the poet who said,

“Think that day lost whose low descending sun,
Views from thy hand no noble action done.”

There is no cant in this sentiment. The noble action does not mean necessarily anything in the realms of romance or heroism. It may be the merest commonplace in business or association, a word of sympathy, kindness or encouragement, a little help sorely needed and not felt by the giver, but if it has shed one beam of brightness into the life of another the dividend is earned. The older we grow the more we realize that life is worth the living. We think too little of the fun there is in it. We are too parsimonious of laughter. We do not appreciate as we ought the man or the woman who can make us forget while we are amused. We cannot help the past and that man is a fool who lives in it. To-day is a better day

than yesterday but to-morrow is the land of promise.
Let us walk through our pathways, be they rugged
or smooth, believing in Browning's beautiful lines:

The earth is crammed with Heaven,
And every common bush afire with God,
But only he who sees takes off his shoes.

CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW

BIRTHDAY ADDRESSES

AT THE

MONTAUK CLUB OF BROOKLYN

1892 to 1899

The Montauk Club is a well known social organization in New York which has attained great prominence and reputation under the Presidency of our distinguished fellow-citizen, Mr. Charles A. Moore.





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